S. Hatch

TIMOTHY TURNABOUT.

THE

TWISTINGS AND TWININGS

OF

Mr. TIMOTHY TURNABOUT

BY REV. GEORGE SHAW,

Author of "Filey and its Fishermen;" "Our Religious Humorists,"

ETC. ETC.

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Preface to the First Edition.

SOME time ago we received a note from a friend residing in a Yorkshire town, requesting us to give a lecture in behalf of the Charitable Fund. "You must select a subject," he wrote, "which will *take*. Lectures here are, as a rule, complete failures. Very few persons attend them. The reason is, they are so 'awfully dry.' We have had several gentlemen holding forth here lately, belonging this neighbourhood. We supposed that their local popularity would secure an audience, but they have usually aired some favourite hobby, or tried to be scientific or philosophic, and that does not do at all. At other times we have secured gentlemen of the 'cloth;' but they have mostly brought us an old essay or sermon, and tacking a title to it, have called it a 'lecture'; but their firstlies, secondlies, and thirdlies have spoilt all. Now and then we have paid a high price for the services of some popular itinerating lecturer, who has served up a hash composed of worn-out historical facts, quotations from the poets, and trite moral maxims dragged in as practical lessons, ending with a grand display of fireworks in the shape of a peroration, in which the orator has soared completely out of the sight of his hearers. Now, excuse me, but we don't want any scientific or philosophic subject, much less an old sermon, or what is worse, an old missionary speech. Nor do we care to hear anything more at present respecting Oliver Cromwell, the 'Uncrowned King'; or John Bunyan, the 'Bedford Tinker'; or 'The Monk that Shook the World.' We admire the memories of these great men, but we don't want them to be 'fetched up' out of their graves every winter. We are tired of ghost-seeing. What

we want is something less 'bookish,' and more life-like than we have had lately. Can't you give us something from your own experience? For, going about as you do, you must have 'heard and seen a vast.' If you could give us something humorous,—not twaddle, of course, but something to keep folks awake, and at the same time to do them good, all the better. I should very much like you to hit as hard as you can at the religious gipsyism of the day, for we are dreadfully pestered here with a lot of folks who are continually running from one society to another. Excuse the liberty I have taken, and write back by return, saying when you will come. Give us the title of your lecture, as we want to have the bills out in a few days."

Taking the hint, we wrote back saying we would deliver a lecture on "The Evils of Instability," but received a reply to say that the subject was suitable, but we must send a more 'striking' title. Accordingly we sent "The Twistings and Twinings of Mr. Timothy Turnabout," which our friend declared was "a capital hit—in fact, the very thing."

Consequently, in course of time, the 'lecture' was delivered, and was declared to be a "decided success." Requests to give it flowed in from different places, and a few of them were complied with. Then followed the request to print, which came from numerous friends and various quarters, but to this we had several objections. First of all, with the exception of the Mayor's speech in Chapter II., not a word of it had been written; secondly, we questioned whether, if it had been written, it would be worth printing; and thirdly, we were not prepared to be at any expense in the matter. To these objections it was replied, that we could soon write it; that as to its not being worth printing, "why that was the case with many books, and people would not be obliged to buy it;" and as for the last,—that we were not disposed to run any pecuniary risk,—that was easily obviated by our bookseller saying he would print it at his own risk. So, in a moment of weakness, we consented, and the first pages of "Timothy" were sent to press.

Have any of our readers ever been haunted by that most inexorable despot, the "printer's devil"? Does he know what it is to have that awful personage ever at his heels, crying, "Copy! More Copy"? If so, then he will be prepared to sympathise with the author, who has written every line of the following pages with that terrible cry in his ears, and in the midst of the duties of a more than ordinarily busy ministry, added to which his opportunities for performing the task have been lessened by severe domestic affliction. To such an extent has this been the case, that we have not been able to re-copy a single sheet, but have sent it on to the printer just as it was written. This, we trust, will be accepted by our lenient friends as some excuse for the carelessness of style which must be evident in every page. The writer must plead the same reason as an apology for any typographical errors the reader may discover. Some of the proofs we have corrected on the road while walking to our appointments, and others in the cabin of the Goole packet, while on the way to special services. But such as it is we must now send it forth, with all its imperfections. Should a second edition ever be called for, we will try to re-write and improve it.

We had intended to insert a chapter on Plymouth Brethrenism, and to have added some practical reflections, but our space has already been exceeded. We trust that it may tend to confirm some weak ones in the faith, and assist those who are already contending for the prize of their high calling, to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

G. S.

SWINEFLEET,
June 27, 1874.

Preface to the Second Edition.

THE first edition of this little book having long since been exhausted, and a steady demand being made for it, the author consented, at the request of his bookseller, to prepare a second edition for the press. He has revised the work and added three new chapters to it. But for a severe attack of illness just as proof of the first sheet came from the printers, he would have rewritten and recast these chapters; but the doctor's dictum, prohibiting all literary work for awhile, obliged him to do as he could and not as he would, and send it forth as it is, not as he would have liked it to have been.

He has been cheered by testimonies from many quarters of the good accomplished by his unpretending effort; and tenders his thanks to those persons, belonging every denomination, for the kindly and appreciative manner in which they have spoken of his book.

One thing—though scarcely worthy of notice—he may be allowed to add. Lectures having been delivered in different parts of the county under the title of this volume, the writer has been frequently asked whether the title belonged to him "or some other man." In reply, he has to say that "the idea and execution of the work originated with himself."

G. S.

Tong Road,
Armley, Leeds,
July 6th, 1880.

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TIMOTHY TURNABOUT.

CHAPTER I.

CONCERNING TIMOTHY'S FATHER, TOMMY TURNABOUT.

IN the days of our boyhood there lived next door to us one of the most curious specimens of humanity we ever met with. He rejoiced in the name of TOMMY TURNABOUT, and had seen many changes during his eventful career. He had commenced active life as a soldier, and been abroad, having served under Cornwallis in India; accompanied Wellington's troops through the campaign in Spain; and been seriously wounded on the field of Waterloo, where he ended his military career. He used to declare that he could not exactly say that he had gone out full and returned empty, or that he had gone out empty and returned full; for he had both lost and gained, had had both ups and downs. For instance, he had gone out with two legs and had come back

with only one, having left one in a hospital in Belgium; he had two ears when he went away, but on his return had only about one and a half, as part of his right one had been shot off in a "set-to with the French in Spain, and was lying somewhere about, as he was too busy at the time to look for it." But if he had lost, he had also gained. For instance, he had several *marks* of honour *on* different parts of his body, and two or three bullets somewhere *in* it; "where, he couldn't tell, as the army surgeons had tried in vain to find them." Besides these, owing to the munificence of a paternal Government, he was allowed a pension of about elevenpence-halfpenny a day; but that, in his opinion, "was not much for a fellow to live handsomely upon." Soon after his retirement, however, he married a person who brought him a nice addition to his income, and which, added to his own, left him independent of daily labour. Now and then he picked up a light job on the docks, or acted as extra-watchman on board vessels, when it suited him to do so. During his leisure hours he devoted his energies to the cleaning of clocks and watches, the binding of books, and other useful pursuits of a similar character. He also added to these the recreative ones of fishing, brambling, mushrooming, and bird-catching. Blest with a wonderfully inventive genius, he turned that faculty to account in various ways; but especially in repairing the hoops, tops, and other playthings of his neighbours' young folks, with whom he was an immense favourite. His house was full of musical instruments and nick-nacks of his own constructing.

But his *chef d'œuvre,* that to which he devoted most of his time all one winter, was a boat, just capable of holding himself, that was to be propelled with a pair of paddles, and which Tommy calculated "would make her go like a shot, and pass everything else on the river." The "launch" was talked about and eagerly anticipated long before it came off; and Tommy, to let all us lads have a chance of seeing it, had fixed the event for a Saturday afternoon, as on that day we had a half-holiday. We well remember accompanying the hero, with a crowd of expectant youths, to a convenient spot for the launch. Depositing his boat in the water, Tommy, who was in high spirits, took his seat in her, seized the paddles, and exclaimed, "Now, lads, just you see her go; I shall be out of sight in quick-sticks!" And so he was, though not in the manner he expected, for at the first turn of the paddles the boat turned over, and Tommy disappeared in fifteen feet of water. He soon, however, rose to the surface, and seizing the overturned craft, found that if he could not keep her up, she was useful in keeping him up until assistance was procured, and he was rescued from his not very perilous but somewhat undignified position. Tommy, however, was not the man to be disheartened, or to take *any* blame to himself. He assured "us lads," as we bemoaned the unfortunate and sudden collapse of the expedition, that "that there boat was constructed on *real scientific and mathematical principles,* and her turning over was a proof of the cleverness of her construction;" for, "do you see," said he, "she was

balanced almost to a hair; but I forgot, in my hurry to get into her, that one of my legs was a wooden one, and lighter than the t'other, and I should have put some ballast in on that side that my wooden leg was; if I had only done that, she would have gone as right as ninepence, and niver turned over at all, not she, indeed!" It was certainly an ingenious manner of explaining away a defeat; and many a time since, when we have been listening to greater and more pretentious men than Tommy Turnabout, logically proving that what *seemed* to be serious defeats were real victories, we have thought of his wooden leg, and the boat he constructed on such "scientific and mathematical principles."

Soon after this, Tommy was suspected of being employed on "something extraordinary," as he was very seldom to be seen about his accustomed haunts. Mysterious hints were every now and then thrown out by Mrs. T. that "something would turn up after a bit, that would surprise us all." Various were the conjectures afloat as to what "the old fellow could be after," and the state of suspense was becoming insupportable, when the mystery was suddenly solved. Mrs. T. had informed us one afternoon that if we were on the look-out soon after dark, "we should see something we didn't see every day." For once she was right, for soon after tea the neighbourhood was alarmed by a terrific explosion. Running out, we discovered that the roof of Tommy's back-kitchen had been blown into the air; and on making inquiries as to the cause, found that our inventive neighbour had been engaged

in a scheme for making his own gas,—which had just been introduced into the town, and which he "reckoned he could make if anybody else could,"—and had got, as he imagined, "everything as right as could be," when on trying to light it, he found to his dismay that it "*wouldn't stop in the pipe, but all blazed up at once,*" a mode of procedure he had never anticipated.

But though all Tommy's schemes were not decided successes, many of them turned out moderately well; and as he was always disposed to lend a helping hand to any of his neighbours, who frequently found his assistance of considerable service, his little failures were soon forgotten, or excited but little notice.

Such was Timothy's paternal—of his maternal ancestor, some account will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

SHOWING HOW TOMMY TURNABOUT WON AN ELECTION AND A WIFE AT THE SAME TIME.

TOMMY Turnabout when we first knew him was a freeman of the honourable borough of Great Gringleby. In this ancient seaport the honours and emoluments of freedomship were, before the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832, obtained in three different ways—by birth, by apprenticeship, or by marriage. In the first case, every son of a freeman, born in wedlock, was entitled to the rights of freemen on attaining his majority. In the second instance, a young man who had served seven years' apprenticeship to a freeman could claim the same privilege on obtaining his indentures; and, lastly, any man, not himself a freeman, could be made free—paradoxical as it may appear—by entering into the bonds of matrimony with the daughter of a freeman. This power of investing their slaves with municipal liberty by the women of Gringleby had been held by them from the days of "Good Queen Bess," who it is generally allowed

conferred this singular favour upon their maternal ancestors during one of her visits to the town. If the traditions of the borough are to be credited, this act arose out of the admiration the immaculate maiden Queen felt for their comely looks and matchless virtues. It is true that the inhabitants of a neighbouring seaport maliciously asserted that the favour was owing to the sisterly sympathy and womanly compassion of the tender-hearted monarch, who, *they* asserted, was, while riding through the town, so struck with their remarkable ug——, well, we will not say that, but plainness, to use a softer word—that she conferred the privilege upon them to help them to get husbands, as it appeared highly improbable that anybody would marry them for their own sakes. This, we need scarcely say, we look upon as a most abominable and unjustifiable slander. But however the right was obtained, there is no doubt about its being possessed. But Tommy Turnabout was not born free, nor did he purchase his freedom by a seven-years' servitude. This distinguished honour came upon him in quite another way. It happened on this wise. The good people of the place were in the midst of a most exciting parliamentary election. It was one of the severest contests that had been known for many years, and the borough had been the scene of several remarkable ones. First of all, the pious electors had been horrified to hear that the nominee of the great house of Buckelsby was in favour of Catholic Emancipation, as he and his party described it, but of Catholic Supremacy, as his opponents termed it. Instantly

the town took fire.] A public meeting was held in the market-place, at which the electors were informed that if the measure passed into law the days of Bloody Mary would return, and the fires of Smithfield would be re-lighted. Added to the loss of their religious rights, the ladies were told that a Catholic Government would be sure to abolish at once the peculiar privileges granted to their great great-grandmothers by the staunch defender of virgins and Protestantism. Memorable were the speeches delivered, and the substance of the spirit-stirring addresses lingers in the memories of some of the grand old veterans who took part in that fierce fight to the present day. But the most memorable of all was the noble and impassioned address of Bigby, the Mayor. Rising to the dignity of the occasion, and the grandeur of the crisis, he exclaimed, "Men of Gringleby, I call upon you by all that is great and good, grand and glorious, to be true to your religion and your town! From the towering pinnacles of that lofty and noble structure where from time immemorial our fathers have wept and worshipped, three centuries look down upon us who are assembled here this day. Borne on the breeze that blows along three hundred years of time, there comes the burning bravery-begetting voice of *Brown*, who boldly braved the brazen bonds of a braggart and bloated church. Standing where I do I seem to hear, rolling round the square of this Right Royal Town, the reverberations of the resolute voice of *Robinson*, who, rather than rob his posterity of their Religious Rights, Regarded not the Rage of Romish Renegades,

but Ran his Race in Rectitude and Righteousness, Raising a light which Radiates amongst us yet with wider and yet wider Range! And, coming up from the green sods of that sacred repository of the slumbering dust of our venerated ancestors, I catch the more subdued tones of a host of noble men more lately and more recently deceased, joining their voices with those of the remoter past, and calling upon you to resist a wretched system which leaves your elders to go down in dreary darkness, desolate, to the dread abodes of death; makes your women slaves of a selfish superstition, and furnishes no moral pabulum or intellectual nutrition whatever for the adolescent minds of the young and rising generation."

Taking advantage of the perfect storm of cheers which followed this magnificent peroration, his worship —who was getting, as one of his hearers somewhat irreverently remarked, "rather short of puff"—took a biscuit and a drop of "something refreshing," and then, emboldened by his previous success, continued: "Men of Gringleby! Shall these things be? Will you allow your rights and liberties to be ruthlessly riven from you! No! Never! Your loud shouts, your ringing cheers, your vociferous acclamations, say, *Never! Never!* Shout, men and brethren, shout, till wafted over the wide waters of our broad and beauteous Humber the voice of freedom wakes from their slumbers the Hucksters of Hull, the Herdsmen of Hedon, the Burgesses of Beverley, the Sailors of Scarborough, the Scavengers of Sunderland, and the Noodles of Newcastle! Shout, ye lovers of the right

and true, until carried on the winds that travel southward, your cry of coming conquest makes the greatest of Grantham, the boldest of Boston, the noisiest of Newark, and the proudest of Peterborough, bite the dust. Shout! until the down-trodden people rise to the dignity of true-born sons of Britain. I see from the altitude on which I stand—already from the lofty position I occupy I behold the voters walking up to duty. The lowliest of Louth lift up their heads, the ground-down of Grantham spring to real greatness, and the poor people of Peterborough put off puerile Popery, and put on Protestant power. Already I hear the cry of the new-born sons of freedom:—

> The dwellers in the boroughs long enslaved,
> Shout to the counties now enslaved no more.
> Swift as the lightning-flash the message runs,—
> From town to town the joyous tidings spread;
> Till far-off cities catch the glorious sound,
> And the glad tidings roll our grand old Island round.

Come that blessed day, and then will I willingly resign my robes and chain of office, and retire into the sanctity of private life!"

Such a speech as this was irresistible. True, one or two carping critics said it was a clever adaptation of a speech his worship had delivered a few days before, on the occasion of his taking the chair at a great missionary meeting; but no one heeded these sons of Belial in the general excitement. The speech aroused the women, and they aroused the men. An opposition candidate came down, public-houses were opened, beer flowed in torrents, and drunken electors hiccupped out their determination to defend their

church and king against the Pope and the great house of Buckelsby. Amongst the staunchest defenders of His Majesty and the true faith was Tommy Turnabout, who stood up for the King as a matter of course, and for the church because he was born in it. Tommy, though not an elector, a misfortune he deeply deplored, worked hard for his party, who certainly did their best, and made a hard fight of it. As the election progressed, it was seen that the numbers would be very close. With the exception of a few waverers, who were waiting to see "which side would pay best," nearly every man had promised his vote; and as had usually been the case in previous elections, not a man deserted his party or "changed his coat." During the early part of the contest the "Blues" headed the poll; but subsequently the Protestant defenders of our hearths and homes placed their candidate seven or eight ahead of the foe. Then the other side took the alarm. Money, which had been spent pretty freely before, was now spent more freely than ever; and votes which had "ruled" at twenty pounds each now fetched a hundred guineas.* Gentlemen canvassing from house to house suddenly discovered that articles which up to that time had been considered of only ordinary value, were "worth their weight in gold." One was so taken with the wonderful singing of a canary that he readily gave £50 for it. Another

* This price was frequently paid. In what is now called the "Old Town," there is a large number of houses built on slightly rising ground, known as Red Hill, a name derived from the fact that many of the houses were built with money paid for votes by the "Reds."

discovered that a cracked teapot was of a very rare pattern, and though fourscore guineas was asked for it, paid the money without a murmur. Whether the fact of their becoming owners of property made them feel that they had an interest in Parliamentary matters or not, we cannot say; but certainly, those who had previously declared "that it didn't matter to them which side got in," suddenly felt it to be their duty to do their best to preserve the time-honoured institutions of their country. When the last day but one of the election came the numbers polled on each side were equal, and every available elector had given his vote except a dealer in marine stores, who having taken £100 *from each side* had "made himself scarce," as he feared the mob. What was to be done? The orthodox electors were at their wits' end, and the Mayor anxiously asked "if no man could be found to save the honour of his ancient town, and preserve the liberties of his imperilled country?" Alas! no response was made to his fervent appeal. Darkness covered the faces of the community, and even the bacchanalian shouts of the free and independent electors were stilled for a while. At length the terrible suspense was ended, and the genius of one man averted the disgrace that threatened the loyal borough. The name of this deliverer was Mr. William Bubbles, or "Billy Bubbles" as he was commonly called by the vulgar.

The manner in which this deliverance was achieved was as follows. Different suggestions had been made, but declared to be impracticable, and the members of

the central committee sat for some time without anyone venturing to resume the subject. At length Billy, who had remained silent during the greater part of the discussion, suddenly arose and exclaimed: "Come, this will never do! What, we are surely not going to give in without an effort. This is not a time to sit still while the ship of state is on her beam-ends. Now is the time for every lover of his country to show his patriotism, not by words, but by deeds. We must all be willing to make common sacrifices for the public good. Remember, men of Gringleby, the address of our noble Mayor. Remember your glorious history. Shame not your fathers! Rob not your children! Desert not your country in her hour of need!

> "Where is the man with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself hath said,
> This is my own, my native"———

Whether Billy was about to add 'town' or 'country' will, unfortunately, never be known, for just as he was approaching the climax of his quotation a beery member cried out, "Hear! Hear!! Hoorah!!!" which so disconcerted him that, turning suddenly round, he gave the interrupter a blow which sent him "spinning" to the other side of the room, who, on recovering himself, was about to return the compliment, when he was seized by his compatriots and hurried out of the place. As soon as silence had been restored, the chairman, assuming one of his blandest smiles, said: "As friend Bubbles has shown us that *he* is a man of *deeds* as well as a man of words, perhaps he will be kind enough to tell us what

it was he was going to propose when he rose to his feet."

Thus appealed to, Billy replied: "Well, sir, as I was saying when I was so unceremoniously and unnecessarily interrupted, this is a time when every lover of his country must be prepared to show that he is willing to make sacrifices for the general weal, and to prove that that is the case with me I am ready to suffer in the tenderest part. Gentlemen! several of you are fathers,—fathers, gentlemen." Here the chairman coughed, while others showed similar signs of impatience. "Well, not to detain you, allow me to say that I, like Jephthah, am willing to sacrifice my daughter for the common good." Here the company opened their eyes; but Bubbles, pursuing the even tenor of his way, continued: "She's not very young, nor perhaps very handsome, and may-be she's a bit of a temper, but she's no worse for that; and, though I say it, she will make any man *who knows how to humour her*, a real good wife. Now, I've saved a bit of brass, not a deal, to be sure, but anyhow I can spare her a hundred; and what I propose is, that the committee give her another hundred, and Tommy Turnabout marry her to-morrow morning, and have the money paid to him as soon as he has given us his vote. What do you say to it?"

"Agreed," cried several of the members simultaneously, "if the proposition suits Tommy. What do you say to it, old boy?"

"We-l-l," said Tommy, "it's ra-ther a serious matter. I've never seen Mrs.—— I beg pardon, I

mean Miss Bubbles, and there's so little time to consider. Besides, may-be she'll not be willing?"

"Oh, she'll be all right," said Bubbles.

"We-l-l," said Tommy, "a man must'nt stand on niceties at such times as these; besides, one mud do worse. It might have been a widow with a lot of children."

"And, then, there's the two hundred pounds," said the chairman.

"To be sure; and no doubt the money will be useful," said Tommy.

"Then we may consider the matter settled," said his worship.

"Sartinly," was the reply.

"Then we must be off directly," said Bubbles, "and get a licence at once, for there's no time to lose. So stir your pegs a bit, old fellow, and don't crawl along as if you had been brought up in Slitherpoke Lane."

Thus appealed to, Tommy followed his intended father-in-law with the meekness of a lamb that is being led to the slaughter.

Next morning, Tommy, escorted by a select bodyguard, who attended him to see that he was kept all right, was taken to church in a cab, where he took Miss Bubbles for better for worse; and at the close of the ceremony was driven, armed with his marriage lines, to the office of the town clerk, where he "took up his freedom," and immediately proceeded to the polling-booth and voted for the popular candidate. His was the last vote recorded, and at the close of the

poll it was found that the defender of that much assailed and somewhat inexplicable thing called the "British Constitution," had been elected by a majority of one.

One amusing circumstance connected with the wedding is worth recording. On leaving the vestry Tommy gallantly offered his arm to his bride, and escorted her to the cab. While she was endeavouring to get into it he noticed, for the first time, that she limped, and exclaimed, in a tone of mingled surprise and disappointment, "Betsy, my dear, are you lame?" This unfortunate expression was at once caught up by the crowd of irreverent youths who clustered around the church-porch, and was repeated again and again as they followed the carriage that contained the bride and her friends. Indeed, for years afterwards, it was no uncommon thing for Tommy to be startled of a dark night by some adventurous youth throwing open his door and shouting, "Betsy, my dear, are you lame?" a recreation in which, it is as well to confess, we have frequently taken a part.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH TIMOTHY PUTS IN AN APPEARANCE UNDER SOMEWHAT PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES.

ABOUT the time that we were introduced into this sublunary sphere, a somewhat singular concatenation of events occurred in the street in which it was our privilege to first behold the light of day. The next house to ours, on the opposite side to that in which Mr. Turnabout lived, was occupied by an industrious mechanic of the name of Steadfast, who was the very extreme of that gentleman in habits and temperament. Now, singularly enough, about two hours after our advent Mrs. Steadfast presented Mr. S. with "a very fine boy;" which interesting event, coupled with the one of a similar character which had happened "the very next door, and on the very same morning," threw all the gossips into quite a flutter of excitement. But this flutter was increased to a perfect whirlwind later on in the day. We have frequently heard old ladies assert that "whenever one death occurs in a place, it is sure to be speedily followed by two others." Be

this as it may respecting deaths, it was certainly the case in the matter of births at the time of which we are writing, for on the afternoon of the day on which Mrs. Steadfast and my maternal parent had favoured their husbands in the manner described, Mrs. Turnabout "took it into her head" to emulate their example, and that very afternoon presented Tommy Turnabout with a son and heir.

Now as this event was quite unexpected, it is not to be wondered at that the excitement it created was indescribable, and altogether eclipsed our advent and that of the infant Steadfast, as the whole neighbourhood had been anticipating these events weeks before they transpired.

Much, however, as we were thrown into the shade by the unexpected arrival of Turnabout junior, it was impossible for us to be altogether lost sight of. There is a beautiful system of compensation everywhere at work, which provides that if anything deducts from our advantages in one direction, it adds to them in another; for nature seems always to be engaged in subtraction and addition. And so it was in our case; for though young Steadfast and myself were "cut out" by the appearance of Master Turnabout, yet on the other hand the talk which the case—or rather the cases—created, led to the attention of the public being directed to us all. The whole neighbourhood confessed "that such a thing had never been known to happen before;" and one old lady declared that "if the youngest of them lived to the age of Methusalem, it was ten to one that they would never see it

happen again." It was prognosticated that "three such extraordinary boys" (and that we *were* marvellously fine babies our mothers and all their female friends asserted), who had come into the world under such remarkable circumstances, "would, if they lived any length of time, be sure to do something wonderful before they went out of it."

CHAPTER IV.

CONCERNING TIMOTHY'S BOYHOOD AND EDUCATION.

AS Timothy and I grew up, we were thrown very much into each other's society, and a pretty strong attachment was the result. When about four years old we were sent to a dame's school, in which the children of freemen were taught the rudiments of scholarship. This school was under the supervision of the Corporation of the borough. The mode of election was as follows. There was a monthly visitation of the school by the Mayor and a select committee of Town Councillors. These worthy gentlemen, after putting the scholars through their exercises, decided which of them were sufficiently advanced to be put to the next higher school, and then proceeded to fill up the vacancies caused by such promotions. To prevent even the appearance of partiality, the names of all claimants were written upon cards, which were deposited in a bag, and well shaken up. The Mayor then drew out as many cards as there were vacant seats, and the children whose names were on the cards were elected. It was after one of these monthly elections that word was brought to our respective parents that we were drawn for old Mrs. Peacock's school.

After running a race through the alphabet and "Reading-made-easy," Timothy and I were elected to Lusby's school, where we spent about three years, and then passed into the Head Grammar School, where we were initiated into the mysteries of "Orthography, Etymology, Syntax, and Prosody."

In this school there were what we termed two "ends," each presided over by a separate master. The head master, who ruled the upper end, was a Scotchman: a somewhat severe but clever man, who was universally respected. The second master, who controlled the lower end, was a man of considerable intelligence and versatility, who could accommodate himself to the different temperaments of his scholars. We have the liveliest recollection of his geniality and kindness to ourselves personally. Under his tuition we made, it was said, considerable progress. Timothy especially was considered unusually quick, and could, when he tried, master a hard lesson in an incredibly short time. But the evil was, he was so often indisposed to try. He lacked, the master used to tell him, "continuity," and never stayed sufficiently long upon any one flower to extract much honey. Consequently, though he was at the head of the class whenever he paid particular attention to the lesson for the day, he was so often unprepared, or only half-prepared, that he was frequently "taken down" by those who were very much his inferiors both in natural talents and acquired information.

When about twelve years of age, I was recommended by the master for a vacancy in the Mayor's

office as a junior clerk, and, to my subsequent regret, left school just at the time when best prepared to profit by it. This step led to my being separated from Timothy, so far as school-companionship was concerned. Our personal intercourse, however, still continued to be of an intimate character, as we attended the same place of worship, and regularly occupied the same pew, every Sabbath morning and evening. The afternoons of the same day were generally spent in a ramble together round the docks or into the country, and the weather must have been exceedingly unpropitious to hinder us taking our weekly excursion. This continued until we were between eighteen and nineteen years of age, when an event occurred of the greatest importance to us both, which completely altered the course we were then pursuing, and affected the whole of our subsequent career. A full account of this event we must reserve for the next chapter.

In the meantime, Timothy had left school. First of all he went into a druggist's shop, but found the business "too monotonous for him." Then he became assistant in a large wholesale and retail grocery establishment, but found that "too laborious." Eventually, at the time I am writing of, he had apparently settled down in a timber-yard, where he was engaged as clerk in taking the dimensions of deals brought by Prussian vessels from the Baltic: an employment for which, owing to his quickness at figures, he was specially adapted.

CHAPTER V.

CONCERNING TIMOTHY'S CONVERSION AND CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH.

WHEN Timothy was about eighteen years of age, the population of Gringleby was greatly increased by the commencement of new docks of a very extensive character. Many hundreds of labourers came to the place in search of employment, the great mass of whom, consisting of navvies and excavators, were deplorably ignorant. Few of them attended a place of worship, or paid any regard to religious or moral duties. Vast numbers were addicted to drunkenness and wild debauchery. This state of things excited the sympathy of the religious part of the community, and efforts of a special character were put forth for the purpose of rescuing them from their lost and ruined condition. The two Methodist bodies, the Wesleyans and Primitive Methodists, were particularly active in these endeavours; and though the material on which they had to operate was of a specially unlikely character, their labours were crowned with

eminent success. A great revival broke out, in which several of the most abandoned were converted from the error of their way. Nor did the good work stop there, for the efforts to save those who were without, soon exercised an awakening influence among the regular hearers of the word, many of whom were saved, and amongst them the writer of these pages. As the revival progressed, it continued to excite attention among all classes of the town, and various opinions, some favourable, and others unfavourable, were expressed concerning it.

After my conversion, Timothy and I had many serious conversations on the subject of personal religion. Having sat from childhood under the ministry of the word, and been instructed in the Sabbath School, he was not without a theoretical knowledge of true religion. For God's house and ministers he felt the profoundest respect; and if during our Sunday afternoon rambles any of our less religiously disposed companions made any remarks bordering on the profane, or insinuated anything against the Bible or religion, Timothy was the first to indignantly rebuke the scoffer. But, though this was the case, he had never been made to feel his personal guilt as a sinner before God, and a neglector of the great salvation. He was, it must be confessed, too much disposed to "trust in himself that he was righteous, and to despise others." But a wonderful change in him suddenly took place.

He had just left home one Sunday morning for his usual place of worship, when his attention was

attracted by a crowd of people, who were "processioning the streets." As they drew near he found that they were singing to a very lively tune, and in a very lusty manner, the following words:

"The gospel news is sounding
To nations far and near:
Come, listen to the echo
Now, while 'tis sounding here.
It brings you news of pardon,
And joy, and love, and peace,
And everlasting happiness,
If you will it embrace.

"You all may come, and welcome,
This is the gospel news:
So life and death's before you,
Come, take you which you choose.
I pray you be persuaded,
Obey the Gospel call,
And taste the virtue of the blood
Of Him who died for all."

Just as the procession reached a corner of the street, it halted, and the people formed themselves into a ring. This done, two or three persons prayed, invoking earnestly the Divine blessing upon the labours of the day, and the conversion of "many, many sinners." Then the leader gave an address. He appeared to be about forty years of age, rather low in stature, but with a frame all iron and sinew. He had gone through almost unexampled toil and physical labour, and his circuits had experienced great prosperity under his supervision. His address, which was delivered in a very earnest but far from boisterous manner, was a very telling one. In some seven or ten minutes he gave an epitome of the doctrine of

Scripture on the fall of man, and the way of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, and concluded by exhorting the assembled crowd to flee from the wrath to come. The address ended, the people again "formed" in lines, and the procession moved on, singing, in continuation of the previous hymn,—

"The way you now are trav'lling
Leads down to the Red Sea,
Where thousands all in ruin lie,
Who travell'd the broad way:
You're on the brink of ruin,
And everlasting woe;
And turn to God you quickly must,
Or down to hell you'll go."

These men had not been troubled with modern theories on the doctrine of eternal punishment, if one could judge from the earnest and solemn manner in which the following verse was both announced by the preacher and sung by the people:

"There you must weep and gnash your teeth,
With bitter groans and cries;
No rest you'll have by day or night,
You'll never close your eyes.
The pains of death will pierce your soul,
Yet death will flee away;
And though in flames you'll ever burn,
You'll never burn away."

But it would be a mistake to suppose that they contented themselves with proclaiming those awful truths without also making known the grand tidings of the Gospel. The hymn closed, as it had opened, with words of comfort and invitation:

"The Gospel's sent to save you,
The kingdom's near at hand;

Repent, and be converted,
And join our little band.
We're marching to fair Canaan,
To joys at God's right hand,
Where all the ransomed sons of God
Around the throne do stand."

By this time the market-place was reached, when another address was delivered, during which many persons from adjacent villages had joined the crowd, which now assumed immense proportions. At its close, the leader, addressing the host, exhorted them "to sing with all their souls," and not to be frightened by a few sneers, but to be bold and very courageous, and play the man for their God. "All of you that can sing, do sing," said he, "and those of you who cannot, why, you can pray. Lord help you, and every one of you, not only to sing and pray, but to believe and exercise faith, and pull the blessing down. Why, the Lord can save souls to-day as well as ever! The Lord's ear is not heavy, that He cannot hear, neither is His arm shortened that He cannot save. He can save to-day. He can save now. Do you believe? Why, when I travelled in Driffield," &c. Here followed an account of some remarkable answers to prayer, and marvellous conversions, which he had personally witnessed, followed by the reiterated assurance that the Almighty was still the same, and by the question, "Do you believe it?" put several times over, until the earnestness and faith of the good man seemed to communicate itself to the crowd, who answered, "Yes! Yes! We do believe." "Well, then," was the ready reply, "keep believing while

we sing the 28th hymn, small book, peculiar measure; and keep believing all the time we are praying, and while the preachers are preaching, and souls shall be saved." Catching his spirit, the vast assembly moved on singing:

"Stop, poor sinner, stop and think,
Before you further go;
Can you sport upon the brink
Of everlasting woe?
Hell beneath is gaping wide,
Vengeance waits the dread command,
Soon to stop your sport and pride,
And sink you with the damned.
Chorus—Once again I charge you, stop;
For unless you warning take,
Ere you are aware you'll drop
Into the burning lake.

"Say, have you an arm like God,
That you His will oppose?
Fear you not that iron rod
With which He breaks His foes?
Can you stand in that great day,
When He judgment shall proclaim,
And the earth shall melt away
Like wax before the flame?
Once again, &c.

"But as yet there is a hope
You may His mercy know;
Though His arm be lifted up,
He still forbears the blow.
'Twas for sinners Jesus died,
Sinners He invites to come;
'None that come shall be denied,'
He says, there still is room.
Once again, &c."

By the time the hymn was sung the "camp ground," as it was termed, was reached. A waggon had been

procured in which the persons appointed to preach took their seats, while the immense company crowded around it. The first speaker was a layman from a village about nine miles off, known in the neighbourhood by the name of Tom Beckworth. He was sturdy and bluff in appearance, and looked, to quote the remark of a hearer, as if "there wossent a deal of nowt in him," but he had not uttered many words before his hearers were "nailed to the spot." His were indeed words that breathed and thoughts that burned. We have seen him on many occasions hold an audience spellbound by the force of his appeals. We distinctly remember his addressing an immense crowd on the sands at Scarborough, on the occasion of a District Meeting being held in that fashionable watering-place, from the words, "Because I have called and ye have refused, now therefore, I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh." The effect that morning was indescribable. Many who had seldom, if ever, heard the truth so plainly and faithfully delivered, trembled like Felix before Paul. On the occasion we are speaking of, he preached from the words, "But as for these mine enemies, who would not have me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them before my face." First, he showed *who were the enemies of Christ;* secondly, *the awful guilt of the conduct of such persons;* and thirdly, *the terrible doom awaiting them.* Step by step he proceeded to show that the conduct of the sinner was most unreasonable and inexcusable, and pathetically described the "kindness and long-suffering of our Lord and Saviour" in bearing with their mani-

fold sins and transgressions. Then he endeavoured to prove that the ruin of sinners was self-caused, and the punishment with which he was visited just. His vindication of the righteous judgment of God was most effective, but the greatest impression was produced by his description of the Lord Jesus, "the King and Judge of all men," commanding His angels "to take the unprofitable servants and cast them into outer darkness, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth." The whole scene was graphically painted before our eyes, and many whose faces on their entering the field had worn a contemptuous smile, were pale as death, while they listened to the messenger of truth describing the terrors of the Lord.

But if the effect of the local preacher's address was great, the impression produced by the one which followed it was, if possible, still greater. It was delivered by the "young preacher" who had just arrived in the circuit, and whose fame as a revivalist had preceded him. In appearance and manner he was the very opposite of his predecessor, being small in stature, and somewhat spare in form. His countenance was, as a hearer near me remarked, "almost heavenly," and indeed we have ourselves seen it, in some of his happiest moments, resemble, as did St. Stephen's, "the face of an angel." Possessed of a voice clear as a bell and remarkably sweet, over which he had the most perfect command, he at times thrilled his hearers with a single expression. Quietly rising, he announced as his text the words, "The wrath to come!" His opening sentences were calmly and deliberately

uttered, while he described the *nature* of the wrath to come. His style was highly poetic, vivid, and striking, and enchanted every listener. As he went on to describe the "wrath" as the wrath of the Lamb, "the meek, holy, unoffending, Lamb of God," his tones waxed louder, and his denunciations of sin and the sinner were increasingly vigorous. Burning with intense zeal, fired with ardent love for the souls of his hearers, he proceeded to warn them to flee from the wrath to come. In glowing words he depicted the home of the lost, the abode of the damned and the devil and his angels. Never shall we forget that sermon. Many of its sentences are still fresh in our memory, although it is more than a quarter of a century since we heard it delivered. It seemed as if hell from beneath had been opened before the preacher's eyes, and that the wailings, to use his own words, "of spirits of human kind, who, agonised under the frown of God, regret for ever the harvest past and the summer ended," were ringing in his ears. In tones of deepest sympathy, he exhorted them to flee from the coming wrath, and find refuge in the wounds and side of Jesus.

The address finished, a "ring" was formed for prayer, where "any person" was allowed to "exercise." This lasted about twenty minutes, when a hymn was announced, and the praying company returned to the waggon to hear the closing address for the morning. This was delivered by the "second" preacher, a man of considerable popularity and ability. His sermon was in many respects as different from the other two, as they were from each other. Clear and logical in its

arrangement, chaste and polished in style, it was, like those by which it had been preceded, calculated to produce a deep and lasting impression. Founded upon the solemn words, "Thy own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings reprove thee; know therefore, and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God," it appealed in a masterly manner to the reason and conscience of the people, showing the folly of a sinful life, and the inevitable consequences of forgetting and forsaking God. This concluded the morning service.

As the people were leaving the field, we saw Timothy standing against the gate out of which they passed. He was evidently waiting for us, and on our joining him he walked along with us towards our respective homes. For some time he was unusually silent, and we were nearly at the end of our journey before he opened his lips. At length he said, "Well, I have felt this morning as I never felt in my life before. I always thought I was as good as most people, and considerably better than many; but what I have heard this morning has made me feel that I am far from the kingdom of God. I never heard such preaching. It came right home to me, and it has made me feel awful. I see I must repent, or else I shall be lost for ever." Being able, in some measure, to understand his state of mind, we said but little, asking him to attend in the afternoon, which he readily consented to do, on condition that we would call for and accompany him.

While at dinner, I mentioned to my father the

impression that had been made on Timothy's mind by the morning preaching. As we had several friends who had stayed to dine with us, this statement led to a discussion quite unexpected on my part. One aged man, a Calvinist of the old school, exclaimed strongly against the "whole affair," and declared that such services were only calculated to bring religion into contempt with intelligent people. His strictures stirred up the spirit of a local preacher from a neighbouring village. He mentioned several instances in which certain noted poachers, drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, and blasphemers had, in his native place, been awakened and converted through the earnest labours of the maligned evangelists. "Nor," said he "has the good work been confined to these outcasts, for many respectable people, as they are termed, who were previously careless about religion, and never thought of putting their heads into either church or chapel, have also commenced to regularly attend the means of grace, and to care not only for their own souls but for the souls of their neighbours and friends. It is all very well," somewhat warmly exclaimed he, "for you high and dry men, with your miserably contracted notions of election and reprobation, to cry out against the noise and excitement produced by these men; but before they came we were all asleep in our sins, and going to hell as fast as time could carry us; and what did you do to awaken us, or who among you cared for our souls, I should like to know?"

Seeing how matters stood, a prudent old gentleman, wishful to turn the conversation into a somewhat

calmer channel, said, "Well, for my own part, I have no doubt but that these men mean well, and that they have done a great deal of good no one in the least acquainted with the results of their labours can for a moment deny; but notwithstanding all that, I sometimes think that they frighten the people too much, and preach the law instead of the Gospel. I do not believe in the spirit of fear, but of love, and would much rather that the sinner were directed to Calvary than to Sinai."

"No doubt but that there is some truth in what you say, and that you are right to a certain extent," observed a minister who was dining with us; "but then you must remember that at such services as those which are being held to-day the vast majority of the hearers are careless and unawakened persons, who have been led by curiosity to attend. Now, in dealing with such people, a different course must be pursued to that which is usually adopted with regular hearers of the word. These casual attenders must first be led to see their danger, before they will endeavour to flee from it; to feel their guilt, before they will ask pardon; to experience the evil nature of their disease, before they will seek a cure. They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. Consequently, it is our business, first of all, to break up the fallow ground, to convince them that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and to do this we must commence with the short, sharp, warning cry, Repent ye, and believe the Gospel!"

"Certainly," said my father, "and as to your

objection that 'fear has nothing to do with religion,' well, I cannot go so far as that, for it is written, 'Blessed is the man that feareth always.' And are we not commanded to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling? Not 'if it be' with fear and trembling, as so many people frequently quote the passage. I grant that it is desirable, and, happily, possible, for us to feel 'that we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father!' But does not the spirit of fear often precede the spirit of adoption? Is not this implied in the expression, 'We have not received the spirit of bondage *again* to fear'? It is evident that Paul, and those believers to whom he wrote, had once been under the influence of the spirit of bondage and fear, but had been led by faith in Christ Jesus into the enjoyment of the spirit of adoption, and had joyful access to God through His well-beloved Son. If I may venture to refer to my own experience on these great matters, I must say that not only am I convinced that the spirit of fear may sometimes precede the spirit of adoption, but may even lead to it. I recollect just now a story I have read somewhere of an ancient German prince, who in early life was bidden by an oracle to search out an inscription on a ruined wall, which should prefigure his mortal fate. He found the Latin words signifying 'after six.' Supposing they revealed the number of days he was to live, he gave himself, for the six days following, to his hitherto neglected soul, preparing himself to die. But finding death did not come, he

was still held to his sober resolutions by supposing six weeks the interpretation; and then he prolonged his holy life to six months, and then to six years. On the first day of the seventh year, by reason of the excellent manhood into which he had thus formed his character, he had gained the confidence of the people, and found the fulfilment of the ambiguous prophecy by being chosen Emperor of Germany. Here is a figure of common experience. We may conceive it to have been a more 'spiritual' process that the prince should have been drawn to piety by loving goodness for its own sake; but it was the timid dread of dying that drew him, and the royal benefactions of a truly Christian monarch justified the agent. Christian biography is crowded with instances of first awakenings by fear. It is remarkable that Luther, whose great soul illuminated afterwards by the text, 'The just shall live by faith,' became the modern apostle of the doctrine of grace as opposed to justification by legality, was first aroused from utter indifference by two terrors—the violent death of his friend Alexis, and the thunderbolt that struck close by him on his way from Mansfeldt to the University. Have you never known a fever, or an accident, or the incipient symptoms of a consumption, to be the determining cause that bent the whole current of a life from earthward to heavenward? Have you never known that the mere dread of punishment or pain, of hell or disgrace, has stopped the erring feet of lust, silenced profanity, driven back the Sabbath-breaker? God is not ashamed to take into the sublime economy of His

purposes these stimulants to virtue; and let us not, in our puerile conceit, venture to pronounce them unworthy. Outgrow them if you will, and can; but take care that you are not found, after all, below, instead of above, the plane of their influence.* But I hear them calling us to dinner, so let us turn our attention to supplying the wants of the outer man; only, let me recommend you to go this afternoon, and hear these men for yourselves."

Dinner over, I called upon Timothy, who accompanied me to the chapel, where the friends had met for the purpose of again processioning the town. On reaching the place, we found that a short prayer-meeting was being held while the people assembled. These came from every quarter, until an immense crowd had gathered together. The procession was then formed, and the service conducted in a similar manner to the one in the morning; but the numbers were much greater, and as the vast mass moved regularly onward, singing the songs of Zion, the sight was, to my mind at least, exceedingly impressive. A different route was taken to that in the morning. On arriving at the place of meeting, we found that vast numbers, principally composed of the working and seafaring classes, were already assembled round the waggon from which the sermons were to be delivered.

A way through the crowd was made for the preachers, singers, and "praying-labourers," who at once surrounded the vehicle. The hymn which was

* Huntington's "Christian Believing and Living."

being sung when the procession entered the field was continued while this was being done, so that the service was never interrupted; for as soon as the singing ceased the leader called upon two or three persons to engage in devotional exercises, and then formally pronounced the Lord's Prayer. A second hymn was then sung, during which the preachers appointed took their seats. This done, the leader introduced the first speaker. His rising was the signal for the drawing nearer to the waggon of many of the navvies who were in the crowd. This arose from the fact that he was a navvy himself, and very much esteemed by his fellow-workmen. As these rough fellows drew near where I stood, I heard several of them say, one to the other, "Ben's the boy to give 'em it. He'll draw it out straight, will Ben, never fear." And his address did not belie their anticipations. Ben Brisk, or Brisk Ben, as he was more commonly called, was one of the best specimens of his class, and it has furnished the church to which he belonged with some of its most valuable and successful labourers. Tall, and almost gaunt-looking, and somewhat advanced in life, he was still not uncomely in his appearance. His voice was one of great sweetness, and his manner, except at rare intervals when it became somewhat impassioned, calm, but full of pathos. Looking his congregation quietly in the face, he said, "I am not much of a preacher, as many of you know, but a plain working-man who has never been at any college but the Lord Jesus Christ's. You must not expect a great sermon from me, for I cannot treat

you to one, but

> "What I have felt and seen,
> With confidence I tell,
> And publish to the sons of men
> The signs infallible."

Founding his remarks upon the words of Jacob, "Let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went" (*Gen.* xxxv. 3), he described, with much pathos, the various seasons of distress in which God had been with His people, and out of which He had delivered them, illustrating his subject with appropriate and telling facts taken from his own history, and urged his hearers to immediate self-surrender of themselves to the God of all their mercies. His plain and pointed discourse apparently produced considerable effect.

He was followed by the young minister who in the morning had discoursed so vividly on "The Wrath to come." During the singing of a verse which preceded his sermon, I overheard a foppish-looking youth exclaim to Timothy, "Now then, will he give us it as black as he did this morning, I wonder?" But Timothy, who was too much impressed to join in the banter, surprised the questioner by quietly remarking, "I don't know, but let him give us it as black as he will, he cannot give me it blacker than I deserve, I know that!" an answer which drew forth the response, "Bless us, Tim, have you been and murdered somebody?" To this Timothy made no reply, but stood waiting for the announcement of the text. This was *Ezek.* xxxiii. 7-11:

"O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

"Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

"Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?

"Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

The manner in which this solemn passage was read was enough to awaken the most indifferent, and the introduction, in which the solemn office and awful responsibility of the Christian minister was described, secured for the preacher and his message the sympathy of all his hearers. Then he proceeded to show that the danger of the sinner was great, his duty plain, and his salvation certain, if he would but accept the offers of mercy; concluding with an earnest entreaty, urging them to turn from their evil ways and live.

After this a prayer-meeting, similar to the one

already described, was held for twenty minutes, when the company returned to the waggon, and a very earnest sermon followed on *Zach.* xiii. 1, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness," which, like those by which it had been preceded, was attended with great unction and power.

But *the* sermon of the day, and that which produced, perhaps, the greatest effect, was the one delivered by the second preacher, whose morning discourse we have already described. In a clear, manly voice, he announced for his text, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me" (*Lam.* i. 12). As the preacher proceeded to unfold the meaning of the passage, I perceived that Timothy was listening with rapt attention. The vigorous reasoning, clothed in eloquent sentences, enraptured him. From being enraptured he became affected, as the baseness and ingratitude of those who despise the "Man of Sorrows," and reject His great salvation, was graphically described. But it was when the preacher came to his application that my friend was the most deeply moved. Indeed, his emotion was so great that had he not leaned upon my arm for support, I believe he must have fallen to the ground. Nor was he the only one who was thus affected—a deep hush—a solemn awe—fell on the entire assembly as there rang out, in the clear, strong voice of the messenger of truth, the appeal again and again reiterated, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?

Is it nothing to you that Jesus should die? Nothing to you! Can you view, unmoved,

> "'That charity divine
> That suffered in your stead,
> That made His soul a sacrifice,
> And quenched in death those flaming eyes,
> And bowed that sacred head?'

"Nothing to you! You for whom was endured—

> "'The bloody sweat, the grief and shame,
> The cross, and passion on the tree.'"

A good many years have rolled away since it was delivered; but in our occasional visits to our native town we have frequently heard many of our "old acquaintances," who were on the ground that afternoon, refer to it as among the most impressive discourses they ever heard. It was a suitable conclusion of a series of addresses remarkable for influence and power, and which, on the whole, we have never since seen surpassed. Nor was the effect of the sermons lessened, but, if possible, increased, by hundreds of voices singing with deep feeling the words:

> "In evil long I took delight,
> Unaw'd by shame or fear,
> Until the Saviour struck my sight,
> And stopp'd my wild career.
>
> "I thought I saw Him on the tree,
> In agony and blood;
> His languid eyes were fixed on me,
> As near the cross I stood.
>
> "Not even at my latest breath
> Can I forget that look!
> It seemed to charge me with His death,
> Though not a word He spoke.

"My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
And filled me with despair;
'Twas for my sins His blood was spilt,
For them He suffered there.

"A second look He gave, which said,
'I freely all forgive;
My blood was for thy ransom paid,
I die that thou may'st live.'

"My heart replied, 'I do believe,
Through Thee I am forgiven;'
The witness then I did receive,
That I was born for Heaven."

As the people crowded out of the field, Timothy, who had kept hold of my arm until the close, held me back, evidently wishful to avoid mingling in the throng. When the company had mostly departed, we started on our way home. During the walk he was even more quiet than he had been after the morning service; and when we came opposite our house, kindly, but firmly, refused my request to go in with me to tea. Nor did he return the invitation: a course which, under ordinary circumstances, would have occasioned me some suprise, as a Sunday afternoon seldom passed without our taking tea together, either at his parents' or mine. This, however, I did not appear to notice, but contented myself with inviting him to accompany me to the "lovefeast" in the evening. He readily promised to do so, and I was leaving him when he exclaimed, "O, can you lend me your hymn-book until after tea? I want to look at the last hymn that was sung this afternoon." Handing him the book, I left him to his own reflections, praying that the wound which had been made by the word which is "quick

and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and pierceth even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit," might be speedily healed by the application of the blood which makes the wounded whole.

After tea, having called for Timothy, we were about starting for the principal chapel, where a love-feast was to be held, when we heard the sound of singing in the distance, and on looking in the direction from whence it proceeded, saw a great multitude coming up the street, and awaited their arrival. Just as they came up the following hymn was being announced:

"Come, with your sore diseases,
Ye needy, poor, and blind;
You, in the wounds of Jesus,
May full redemption find.
Ye wretched and ye dying,
Ye guilty sons of men,
To you He now is crying,
'Ye must be born again.'

"Behold Him on the mountain,—
That mount on which He died;
Go plunge into the fountain
Which gushes from His side.
You now may feel Him precious,
Arise, make no delay,
His blood is efficacious,
'Twill wash your sins away.

"Obey the invitation,
To Jesus' sceptre bow;
He offers you salvation,
And waits to save you now.
Your peace is made with heaven,
For you the Saviour died;
You all may be forgiven,
And feel His blood applied."

By the time this had been sung the chapel was reached. On our entering we found every available seat already occupied, and in a few minutes, owing to the arrival of the procession, it was crowded in every part, and many found it impossible to gain admittance.

It may be that to some of our readers a "love-feast" is a novelty, and that others who have heard of such services have formed very unfavourable ideas respecting them. We have read professed descriptions of lovefeasts which were little better than a burlesque. Some of these were written by foes, but others have been penned by writers evidently friendly to Methodism on the whole. But even their lucubrations evidence ignorance of what these services are, and want of sympathy with the motives of those who engage in them. In an article of this class, which appeared some time ago in the pages of one of our most popular reviews, and which was afterwards reprinted in a separate form and extensively circulated, lovefeasts are described as a kind of religious saturnalia, at which vain and empty individuals exhibit their folly in a most offensive manner. It may be that in some of these services, as in others where all who think proper are not only allowed but urged to take part, there may be occasional exhibitions of ignorance and thoughtlessness, not particularly edifying to cultivated and pious minds; but we confess that though we have attended and conducted some hundreds of such services, in large towns, country villages, and rural hamlets, in which almost all classes of society have taken part, we have seldom

witnessed anything of the kind; while, on the other hand, we have heard many "experiences" related which have been calculated to both edify and establish those who were privileged to listen to them. Such was the case on the occasion we refer to; and for the information of those unacquainted with these popular religious gatherings, we will venture to attempt a description of the one Timothy attended.

Punctually at six o'clock the minister appointed to conduct the service announced the following hymn:

"Behold what wond'rous love and grace!
When we were wretched and undone,
To save our ruined, helpless race,
The Father gave His only Son!
Of twice ten thousand gifts divine,
No gift like this could ever shine.

"Jesus, to save us from our fall,
Was made incarnate here below:
This was the greatest gift of all!
Heaven could no greater gift bestow.
On Him alone our sins were laid—
'Tis finished: now the ransom's paid.

"O gift of love unspeakable!
O gift of mercy all divine!
We once were heirs of death and hell,
But now we in His image shine.
For other gifts our songs we raise,
But this demands our highest praise.

"Praise shall employ these tongues of ours,
Till we, with all the hosts above,
Extol His name with nobler powers,
Lost in the ocean of His love:
While angel-choirs with wonder gaze,
We'll fill the heavens with shouts of praise."*

* The above hymn is one of many composed by one of the early Primitive Methodist Ministers. We have never met with it in any collection but that used by the denomination to which he belonged. We give it at length as a specimen of the charming simplicity and thoroughly Scriptural character of the hymns sung at those services.

This ended, prayer was offered, after which "Be present at our lovefeast, Lord," &c., was sung, "by way of asking a blessing." Bread (cut into small squares) and water were then passed round, which were generally partaken of, and thanks were sung in the usual form. Then the "speaking" commenced. Following one another in rapid succession, over forty persons related their "experience," and bore testimony to the willingness of God to save, the possibility of knowing our sins forgiven, and the power of the Saviour's blood to wash the foulest clean. In some cases, interesting accounts were given of the circumstances under which the narrators were convicted and converted. One was "by a dream and vision of the night;" a second was led to reflection by the sudden and unexpected death of a brother; while a severe and protracted affliction caused a third "to think on his way, and turn his feet unto God's testimonies." It was observable, however, that in the great majority of instances this great work had been directly effected by the preaching of the word. But, by whatever instrumentality they had been brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, all, with one accord, gave praise to God, who, according to His abundant mercy, had begotten them again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and which fadeth not away.

During the recital of these experiences various emotions were excited. Some wept, others rejoiced, and occasionally gave utterance to their joy in bursts

of "Halleluia!" "Glory!" "Praise the Lamb," &c.; but to us there was nothing like the appearance of disorder. A deep feeling of awe pervaded the assembly, and many felt that the place was "none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven."

During the service the speaking was frequently diversified with singing. Sometimes the leader would announce a verse, and at others a brother would "strike up" a tune which would be at once recognised by the majority of the congregation, who instantly took part in it. The verses sung were occasionally of a very solemn character, such as

> "A charge to keep I have,
> A God to glorify,
> A never-dying soul to save,
> And fit it for the sky:"

but they were mostly of a lively and exceedingly joyous character, full of feeling and pathos. It was noticeable that the verses announced by the minister were more grave and dignified than those "started" at the option of individual speakers, though now and then those announced by the latter persons were well-timed and produced a good impression. This was especially the case when a man well known for deep and fervent piety commenced, in a fine old six-lines-eights tune, the grand old Methodist hymn:

> "Now I have found the ground wherein
> Sure my soul's anchor may remain."

The feeling became quite enthusiastic during the singing of the lines:

> "O Love, thou bottomless abyss!
> My sins are swallowed up in thee;

Covered is my unrighteousness,
Nor spot of guilt remains on me;
While Jesus' blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy, cries:"

and rose still higher during the next verse:

"Though waves and storms go o'er my head,
Though strength, and health, and friends be gone;
Though joys be wither'd all and dead,
Though every comfort be withdrawn;
On this my steadfast soul relies,
Father, Thy mercy never dies."

By this time the feeling was well-nigh overwhelming, and the vast multitude were moved like a field of corn before the strong wind of heaven, as the last verse was sung with, if possible, more unction and zest than the former:

"Fix'd on this ground will I remain,
Though my heart fail, and flesh decay;
This anchor shall my soul sustain
When earth's foundations melt away:
Mercy's full power I then shall prove,
Loved with an everlasting love."

The last two lines were sung again and again; and it was not until the leader intimated that there were many friends to speak, and the time for closing was advancing, that the singing ceased.

One very apt introduction of a verse was made, we remember, by "Tom Beckworth," one of the preachers of the day. He occupied his seat in the pulpit, and was called upon by the minister to take charge of the meeting for a short time. Rising, he said: "Last Sunday morning I was going up our village, for the purpose of visiting and praying with a member of my class who was ill, and I had to pass two

irreligious men who were leaning over a pig-sty wall, and evidently calculating the weight of the animals inside. Now, as I seldom go from house to house on a Sunday, they appeared very much surprised to see me, and one of them said, in a sneering way, 'Halloo, Tom! What, are you gossiping on a good Sunday morning?' 'I'm not gossiping,' I said, 'but

'Enjoying the grace to angels given,
Serving the royal heirs of heaven.'

Come, now, let us sing that verse: it's a favourite of mine, and I often hum it over when returning from my appointments, after I have preached three times, and walked between twenty and thirty miles. Now then, let's have it in grand style:

'O that my Lord would count me meet
To wash His dear disciples' feet,
Enjoy the grace to angels given,
And serve the royal heirs of heaven.'"

And in right grand style it was sung, the whole congregation standing on their feet while doing so.

While speaking of Beckworth, we will venture to give a specimen of his happy way of illustrating a subject by a reference to his own experience. He was quoting the passage, "Praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit," &c. "Now," said he, "I should like you to clearly see the distinction between prayer and supplication. I was planned at a village a few miles away from here one Sunday, some months ago. When dinner was over, the farmer at whose house I was staying, rang the bell for the servants to come in, and then called upon me to pray with them; so I prayed, asking the Lord

to bless him and all under his roof. After a while we went to chapel, where I preached. As we were coming back a woman opened the door of a house we were passing, and said, 'Mr. Beckworth, do come in: our poor girl's dying, and she's not converted!' I went in, was shown upstairs, and a touching sight presented itself. There lay a young woman, about twenty-five years of age, evidently in the last stage of consumption, As soon as I entered the room she exclaimed, 'Oh, Mr. Beckworth, I am glad you've come: I did so want to see you! Do pray for me!' I took a seat by her bedside, and, as well as I knew how, pointed her to Jesus; but all her cry was, 'Do pray for me! Do pray for me! Do pray for the Lord to save my poor soul!' I answered her that I could not save her, but that Jesus was able and willing to save her just then. I tried to show her the way of faith, and repeated to her, and got her to repeat, the words:

'Believe on Him who died for thee,
And, sure as He has died,
Thy debt is paid, thy soul is free,
And thou art justified.'

Still I could not get her to believe. She wept and prayed, but seemed no better. At last I knelt down, and began to pray with her and for her. And while I was praying an indescribable feeling of concern for her salvation rose within me. I felt as if I must die if she were not saved. There she was, just on the brink of the grave, and without peace and pardon! If ever I prayed, I prayed then. I never felt more concerned about, or prayed more earnestly for, my

own salvation, than I did for the salvation of that dear girl. As I pleaded, the grace of true supplication was poured out upon me. I wept, and wrestled, and made supplication with tears unto Him who was able to save her from death; and as I did so, faith rose: we both took hold of God, and pleaded His great and exceedingly precious promises. Soon she bounded into liberty, and we both praised God together. Oh, how happy we were! Her poor old father, though unconverted himself, was half-wild with delight, while her mother wept for joy. I urged both of them to give themselves to God, and to do so there and then. I had not spoken many words before both of them fell on their knees, and cried for mercy. Nor did they cry long, or in vain, for the Lord pardoned their sins and made them happy. Bless you! the room seemed like heaven. The dear girl lived a few weeks, very happy, and then died triumphant. The father and mother are now both on their way to heaven. Now I think you can all see the difference between 'prayer' and 'supplication.' When I knelt down in the farmer's house I 'prayed.' I was quite sincere when I thanked God for the food of which we had partaken, and when I asked a blessing on him and his family; but it was when I knelt by the bedside of that dying girl that I 'supplicated' the throne of mercy with strong crying and tears." This anecdote was followed by an earnest exhortation, addressed to the members, to seek, by prayer and supplication, the outpouring of the Spirit, and the conversion of sinners in connection with the service then being held.

It is true that at some lovefeasts the hymns sung were not all of them specially distinguished by poetic beauty or deep feeling. They partook more of the nature of a dialogue or address than a devotional composition. We remember hearing one in which a kind of conversation took place between "Apollyon" and a "Pilgrim," where a verse was assigned to each, the former proposing questions, which were answered by the latter. In the opening, his Satanic majesty is made to say:

"Good morning, brother traveller,
Pray tell me what's your name?
And where it is you're trav'lling to?
Also, from whence you came?"

To which the Pilgrim answers:

"My name it is the Pilgrim bold,
To Canaan I am bound;
I'm from the howling wilderness,
And the enchanted ground."

Satan, still inquisitive, asks:

"Pray, what is that upon your head,
Which shines so clear and bright?
Also, the covering of your breast,
So dazzling to my sight?
What kind of shoes are those you wear,
On which you boldly stand?
Likewise, the shining instrument
You bear in your right hand?"

To which questions the Pilgrim, with much apparent good nature, replies that the one is gospel hope, and the other gospel peace; and that by their aid he is resolved "to fight till death, and win fair Canaan's land." But this information does not appear to be at

all satisfactory to the enemy of all good, for he is next represented as saying:

"You'd better stay with me, young man," &c.;

and assures the youth he is mistaken, and that "for his arms and pilgrim dress," he will give all the land to him to enjoy. This offer the Pilgrim indignantly rejects, and declares his fixed determination to "prove faithful to his Lord's commands," and inherit the rich lands of Canaan. Another hymn commenced:

"Is there anybody here like weeping Mary?
Call to my Jesus, and He'll draw nigh;
Oh, glory! glory! Halleluia!
Glory be to God who rules on high."

And went on to enquire:

"Is there anybody here like sinking Peter?
Is there anybody here like blind Bartimeus?
Is there anybody here like faithless Thomas?
Is there anybody here that wants salvation?"

While a third asked:

"Where is now the prophet Daniel?
Where are now the Hebrew children?" &c.

And the answer in each case was:

"Safe in the promised land."

Our readers may smile at these specimens of "devotional poetry," and perhaps be disposed to condemn those who used, or allowed them to be used; but it must be remembered that those persons by whom they were most highly prized were scarcely capable of comprehending truth, when put before them in a less simple style; and that as they became more intelligent, such compositions gradually disappeared, and were superseded by a higher class of literature. Even now,

however, it is no uncommon thing for us to meet with elderly persons who deeply lament the absence of their old favourites from our Connexional psalmody, and most sincerely declare that we have no such singing now as we had when they were young. It is not long since, that one of these old veterans brought out of a private drawer for our inspection a copy of the "old hymn-book," wrapped up in so careful a manner as to show that it was looked upon by him as a great treasure. Pointing to one of its hymns, he declared that in his opinion it was of unrivalled excellence, and "the very best he had ever heard sung in his life;" declaring at the same time that he considered it was "a burning shame to leave it out of the new book." At the risk of being considered tedious, we venture to present our readers with a copy of it, as a specimen of what our fathers considered the highest style of psalmody:

"You all are invited with Christ to embark,
On board His rich ship, the ancient Noah's ark,
Which was launched at Eden, has long been at sea,
And comes into harbour for you and for me.

"I entered on board her; for who could delay,
Where so many could sing, could praise, and could pray?
Our Captain is Jesus, His mercy is great;
Our labour is heavenly, our bounty is sweet.

"Thrice blessèd be He who launched her at first,
And rigg'd her, and stored her, on purpose for us:
God's love, so amazing, is still her main-sail;
She's plank'd with salvation quite down to the keel.

"Provision on board, and clothing, great store,
(Provided by wisdom, design'd for the poor);
The robes of salvation, with which our great Lord
Will clothe all your souls, when you're entered on board.

"This vessel was built and completed by grace,
Was fitted and stor'd for burden and chase;
From her bow to her stern, she's strongly secured;
Her cargo is wealthy, and wisely insur'd.

"The winds and the waves He still holds in His hands;
And likewise her foes are all at His command;
Near six thousand years she's been cruising the main,
And mann'd with the ransom'd she harbours again.

"Our Captain we'll praise who took us on board;
In safety we are if we sail with the Lord.
Bound to the Fair Haven, our port we shall gain,
In spite of all dangers in crossing the main."

The service was brought to a close about eight o'clock, and was followed by a prayer-meeting which lasted over two hours. Soon after its commencement a space was cleared for a "penitent form," and "all those who were seeking salvation" were earnestly exhorted to come forward. They were distinctly told that there was no particular virtue in the form, and that one part of the place was no more sacred than another; but that, at the same time, if they were anxious to be saved, coming to the form would show that they were decided to give themselves to God, and live to His glory, and would afford the friends an opportunity of giving them counsel and comfort. The verse, "Come to Jesus," was then sung, "to give them an opportunity of deciding." While it was being sung several persons came forward to be prayed for. They were soon surrounded by numbers who alternately prayed and sung, while several others, at the request of the minister, knelt by them and sought to direct them to Christ. Soon one man, who had been for many years a notorious character, cried out, "Lord, I will believe!

I do believe! I'm a great sinner, but Thou art a great Saviour, and I feel Thou saves me now." Springing to his feet he shouted "Glory!" with all his might, and soon the place rang with the reiterated praises of all the people, who joined the new convert in singing:

"Praise God for what He's done for me!
I once was blind, but now I see;
I on the brink of ruin fell,—
Glory to God! I'm out of hell.

"Therefore to Him my feet shall run,
My eyes on His perfections gaze,
My soul shall live for God alone,
And all within me shout His praise."

Prayer was then resumed, and soon one, and then another, rose to their feet declaring "what great things the Lord had done for them." As they rose from the form, others came forward and took their places, and this was continued until nearly thirty persons had professedly found Jesus. The minister then invited "all those who had obtained salvation" to come together, and after giving them suitable advice, he commended them to God and to the word of His grace, and concluded the meeting.

One incident which occurred in connection with the closing part of the service was peculiarly affecting. A young man who had found liberty at one end of the chapel, on coming up to join those who had been saved at the other end, discovered that his wife was among the number. Both had been converted unknown to each other, and when they found that this was the case, they eagerly embraced each other, and, with tears flowing down their faces, gave united thanks to God

who had made them one with Himself and His Son Jesus Christ.

As Timothy parted with me that night, he acknowledged that he had never been so much affected in his life, and hoped he should never forget what he had heard and felt that day.

During the following week Timothy's mother enquired of me what we had been doing to him, as he did not go out as before, but spent all his spare time upstairs. I assured her she had no need to trouble herself, as I had had the same complaint, and I had no doubt but that he would soon be well. She appeared somewhat puzzled, and asked if there was "anything stirring, and if it was smitting?" and on my replying that I was glad to find that a very old complaint, which first broke out at Jerusalem, was rapidly spreading, and that I hoped she would soon be "smitten" with it, she was evidently put out a little; but her wrath was somewhat assuaged when I told her that I knew of a great Physician, who was both able and willing to effect a speedy cure. She wanted "to know all about it;" but I contented myself with promising to tell her on another occasion, as they that were whole needed not the physician, but they that were sick.

For two or three weeks, Timothy regularly attended the chapel with me, during which time his conviction for sin and his desire for salvation "waxed stronger and stronger." At length, one Tuesday evening, he knelt at the penitent form, and after more than an hour spent in earnest prayer and supplication, obtained the "peace which passeth all understanding." The next

evening he called to accompany me to the class-meeting, and at its close desired that his name should be placed on the list of members on trial. While the leader was writing his name in the class-book, he grasped my hand and exclaimed, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God."

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH TIMOTHY FIRST "WAGS HIS POW IN A PULPIT."

AFTER Timothy joined the Society and became a fellow classmate of mine, our friendship, which had for a long time been of a very intimate character, became still more so. We attended in company the different means of grace, and were thus thrown more than ever into each other's society. Our round of duty was a moderately busy one. We commenced on Sunday morning at six with a "private band," at which some half-dozen of us, all young men, engaged in mutual prayer, and conversation as to our state of religious experience and progress in the divine life. Then we stayed the regular seven o'clock prayer-meeting, which closed at eight. After breakfast we went to teach in the Sunday-school until preaching commenced, which was held in the same building, and concluded at noon. Half-past one found us in our classes again, where we remained until four, and after tea we had preaching in the open air at five in the summer, and a house prayer-meeting at the same hour in winter. Then the evening preaching-service at six, followed by a prayer-meeting which concluded

at nine, or at times was held until ten o'clock, according to circumstances. Nor was this multiplicity of services confined to the Sabbath, for there was a meeting of one kind or another every evening in the week, which we seldom failed to attend. Whether such a continuous round of services was prudent or not, it certainly conduced to promote fluency and freedom of utterance in those who continually engaged in it. When Timothy and I had been connected with the society about nine months, the authorities of the circuit sent us a note authorising us to accompany Bro. Brisk, a local preacher, to his appointments, and to exercise our gifts under his direction. As he was exceedingly popular, and was usually planned to most of the places in the station, he found us plenty of work. I have a lively recollection of our first Sunday out. We started after an early breakfast for a village six miles distant, and a mile or more of our walk lay across newly-ploughed fields. Our town-made boots were not particularly well suited for such a journey, and we were thankful when the first part of it was over. Arrived at the village, we found a house crowded with people. Just as our leader was commencing the service, the woman of the house approached him, and probably fearing that if the three of us held forth the matter might be serious, whispered, "You must mind and finish before church-time, for my master is parish clerk." This intimation was sufficient for me, and at my request I was freed from speaking, while Timothy was liberated also, with the understanding that we must be prepared for the afternoon.

After the service, we were drafted off to different houses "to get a bit of dinner." I was sent along with an old man whose age, according to his own account, was something marvellous. He had been in the army, and entertained me on the way home, and during the time I spent in his house, with a number of old soldiers' stories. After dinner, he accompanied me across the fields to meet my companions at a point fixed on before we had separated. The old man was brimfull of anecdotes of the old preachers, whom he admired exceedingly. One of them—the author of a Biblical Dictionary of no mean order—he assured me was the grandest "scholard in the whole connexion;" and as a proof of it, he declared "that he once heard him preach a sermon that went back tens of thousands of years before the flood; and he knew all about it." I ventured to ask him what might have been the subject of it, when he replied, "Oh, it was about a man called Abraham, that offered up his son Isaac." The above is a very moderate specimen of the stories he regaled me with as we went along. After a four miles' walk we reached the village, where we were expected for the afternoon. Here I found a house which, like the one we occupied in the morning, was crowded to suffocation. The ceiling was very low, and when our friend Ben, who was over six feet, stood up to announce the hymn, his head was inconveniently high. At last it was considered that he should stand in a place which had been made as a repository for the eight-days' clock, while that useful article of furniture was removed into the garden. This done, the service commenced,

and Timothy said a few words, and was followed by our conductor, who preached a short sermon. Service over, the question arose "where were we all to go to tea?" After a little contriving, places were found for us, and that difficulty overcome. Tea over, we started for our next appointment. This was at a village four miles away, where we had a good chapel and a large congregation. Previous to the afternoon service I had excused myself on the ground that there would not be time for three of us; and now, as the night service was approaching, I pleaded that I ought to be liberated, and argued with our friend that as there would be many in the congregation who had come purposely to hear him, it would be wrong to put them off with three short addresses, in the place of an excellent sermon such as he was sure to give them. To this Ben replied that the difficulty might be obviated by Timothy being relieved, as he had already spoken. Tim did not wish to be relieved, and thought "it would not be fair to come so far, and not be allowed to preach to the largest congregation of the day." Consequently, it was arranged that as we were a long way from home, and it was desirable we should not be late in leaving, I should announce the first hymn, engage in prayer, and read the lesson. These preliminaries over Timothy announced for his text *Zach.* iii. 9: "Upon one stone shall be seven eyes;" and commenced as follows: "Our time being limited, we shall dispense with all formal and preliminary observations, and without detaining you with extraneous matter, proceed at once to notice that the stone here spoken of is the Lord

Jesus Christ. On this stone are seven eyes. These are the following: first, the eye of the Father; secondly, the eye of angels; thirdly, the eye of devils; fourthly, the eye of the penitent; fifthly, the eye of the believer; sixthly, the eye of the dying saint; and seventhly, the eye of the lost sinner!" In expatiating upon the first two or three points he proceeded pretty comfortably for a short time, but soon became confused, and after trying to "darn his cobwebs" unavailingly, brought his remarks somewhat abruptly to a close, or as Ben afterwards said, "came to a rather stunt end."

As soon as the prayer-meeting was commenced we started for home, which was about nine miles away. While we were crossing the fields our conductor commenced to chat with us on the subject of our day's work, evidently, I thought, with the intention of seeing what we thought of it, for suddenly turning round, he said, "Well, my lads, and how have you enjoyed the day, so far?"

"Oh, very well, so far as I am concerned," I replied; "as for Tim, he must answer for himself."

"Well," said he, "I have not seen much of this kind of work yet, and one cannot form an opinion from a single day; still I must say that I have been surprised at one or two things."

"What are they?" asked Ben.

"Well, I felt rather queer in the morning when they were discussing the matter of where we were to go to dinner. I felt as if I should have liked to have gone home, and I thought it was not much better at tea-time. I had a good mind to go without my tea."

"Why, bless thee, lad," said our old friend, "thou art new to this sort of thing yet. When I first begun, I've walked scores of miles without a bite passing my lips, and have been glad to gather the haws from the hedges, or to find a turnip in a field through which I have been passing. I soon, however, learnt to do better than that. I remember one Sunday night, after I had walked over twenty miles during the day, and preached three times, meeting one of our old preachers at four-lane-ends, where we had arranged to wait for each other. I was there first, and was nearly famished. When he saw the state I was in, he said, 'Well, Brisk, you should never start for home of a night without providing yourself with a pocket-pistol.' 'A pocket-pistol!' I said, 'what in the world do you want with a pocket-pistol?' 'Oh,' said he, 'I have often met with the monster hunger in these lanes late at night, and I assure you he's no pleasant foe to meet at any time. So now, whenever I find him approaching, I give him the contents of my pocket-pistol, and he disappears at once.' Seeing I was puzzled he took from his pocket a paper-parcel, and opening it, handed me a slice of bread and butter, saying, 'There, eat that, and then let's get on our way,' and taking another himself, we went on, eating our suppers as we walked and chatted."

"I should not mind if I had a pocket-pistol with me," I observed, "for I begin to feel hungry already, and do not know how I shall feel before I get home."

"Nor I either," said Tim. "It's no joke walking four miles after tea, and then having nine more miles to walk at this time of night."

"Nonsense," said Ben, "come along with you. I tell you, again, this bit of a journey is nothing at all to what I've had to do again and again."

After a little more banter, he said, "Well, now, let's see if I've not something here will do for all three of us," producing at the same time some slices of bread and bacon, which though very thick and fat, we speedily demolished.

"Well," said Tim, "I've often laughed at the tales I've heard about Methodist parsons liking fat bacon, and thought them good jokes, but I little expected to see the day when I should feel so thankful for a slice myself."

"But did you bring this from home," he suddenly asked, "and have you carried it with you all the day?"

"Not I, indeed! I knew better than that. You remember me calling at a farm-house for a drink of water as we came into the village. Well, that is my home when I am planned here, as I often am, afternoon and night. The master and mistress are both members with us, and they wanted me to go back to supper, but I told them it was a long way out of our road, and it would make us very late, but I said I did'nt mind taking a pocket-pistol, for 'I have two defenceless lads with me who are not used to the road.'"

"Why, you surely did not beg for us!" said Tim; "I declare I think this is next to turning cadgers. If I'd known, I don't think I could have swallowed a bite."

Ben burst into a loud laugh, and exclaimed, "Well now, that beats all I've heard lately. If I had thought

thou had been so butter-mouthed, I'd have let thee have walked a few more miles without anything to eat."

"You may laugh as you like," said Tim, who seemed a little annoyed, "but I tell you, I should walk a good many miles before I could bring myself to go begging for something to eat like a common cadger."

"And so would I, my lad, and more than that; so I have, when it has been for myself. I fancy I've as much independence about me as most men, and haven't eat much bread since I was six years old that I have not first earned, and hardly too, sometimes. Nobody that knows Ben Brisk will say that he ever eat the bread of idleness; but for all that the labourer is worthy of his hire. That's in the Bible, thou knows. It's a poor affair if when a hard-working man has left his home and family, and walked over twenty miles on the only day in the week in which he has the chance to get a bit of rest—it is a poor affair, indeed, if the people to whom he has been breaking the bread of life for nothing, can't give him a bit of something to keep him from dropping down on the road before he gets home. I've done it many times, all for want of saying a word, but I hope I'm wiser than to do so now."

"But folks talk so about preachers going out for what they can get," said Tim.

"Then let them talk," said Ben, somewhat warmly, "if they don't talk about us, the poor fools will be talking about somebody else. But, never mind; they talked about the Master. Did not they call Him a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners? And if they did these things in the green-tree what will

they do in the dry? Go out for what we can get! Poor things! I should like to have them with me a bit, and see how they would take to it."

Ben strode along at a tremendous pace while thus relieving his feelings; at length, slackening his speed, he turned round, and in a quieter and somewhat chuckling tone said, "If you like, lads, I can tell you a capital story about an old friend of mine, and how he served one of these meddling fellows."

"Let's have it!" we both exclaimed, placing ourselves, one on one side of him and the other on the other, the better to hear the story.

"Well," began Ben, "my friend is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, local preachers living on the Yorkshire Wolds, and began to preach when he was very young. Soon after he married, a neighbour of his used to delight to make fun of him as a preacher. If he saw him leaving home on a Sunday morning, he would open his door and shout out, 'Holloa, George! then you're off for another good blow-out;' and as sure as ever he saw him after his return, would ask, 'Well, my friend, did you get a good blow-out on Sunday?' George bore it all very patiently a long while, until he began to think it was time to attempt to stop the mouth of the gainsayer. So one night about the middle of the week he looked into his neighbour's shop, and said, 'O, Sam! I've called to ask a favour of thee.' 'What is it?' said Sam, who on the whole was not a bad-hearted fellow, 'if I can oblige thee, I will.' 'Why,' said George, 'I'm planned out three times on Sunday, and as my wife is not very well I am

anxious to be home at night, and it's a terrible long way to come by oneself. I wish thou would go with me for company.' Sam hesitated for a moment or two, and then exclaimed, 'Well, I don't mind for once. Besides,' said he, winking at two or three customers who were standing in the shop, 'I shall get a chance of a good blow-out!' 'All right,' said George, 'I will call on thee not later than five on Sunday morning.' Sam rather demurred to this as a very early hour, but George assuring him that he must leave by that time, he assented, and the thing was settled.

"At five next Sunday morning, accordingly, the two started for a village in Holderness, a distance of about twenty miles, where they arrived about half-past ten. They found the chapel crowded, and George at once commenced his duties. These performed, the congregation dispersed without anything being said about dinner. When George and his companion had got a little way from the chapel, the latter said, 'And where are we for now?' 'Oh! for the next place, to be sure,' was the reply, 'and we must get on as fast as we can, for, as it is over six miles to it, we have no time to lose!' 'But where are we going to dinner?' said Sam. 'Dinner! bless thee! Primitive Methodist local preachers think themselves very well off if they can get a cup of tea, to say nothing about dinner.' On they went, now sitting down by the way side and resting awhile, for the day was dreadfully hot, and then pushing on again until the afternoon preaching-place was reached. This was a small house, which was literally packed with hearers. Service over, the woman

of the house asked George and his friend to stay and have a cup of tea, 'just as they had it;' but he declined, saying that they had a long way to go before preaching time, and they must be getting on. He drank, however, a mug of cold water, and eat a piece of dry bread, his companion doing the same. Then on they trudged again, stopping and resting as they had done on the way from the first appointment. Every now and then, George dropped behind, and took a nibble at a hard biscuit he carried, and then rejoined his neighbour. At length the next village was reached, just in time for the evening service. Preaching over, the preacher commenced the prayer-meeting, and while the members were absorbed in their devotions, he quietly took up his hat, and beckoning Sam to follow, left the chapel. Outside, Sam anxiously asked if they were not going somewhere to supper. 'Supper!' said George, lifting his eyebrows in well-assumed surprise, 'Supper! why, we are twelve miles from home yet.' 'I don't care if we are fifty,' said Sam, stopping before a small public-house, 'I shan't leave here until I've had something.' 'Very well, said the preacher, 'if you will, you will; but I shan't go to a public-house.' Sam accordingly entered the inn, and got a pint of beer and some bread and cheese, and thus refreshed joined his companion. When they had got four or five miles towards home, they came to a dreadfully steep hill, but when about half-way up it, Sam sank down, fairly exhausted, and declared that 'he could no more walk the next eight miles than he could fly.' He begged piteously of his friend to try and procure a conveyance,

but George assured him that he had no idea where one could be got. After resting for a while, he managed to get him to the house of a cottager who lived by a wood, and who knew George; at the latter's entreaty, he took pity upon the worn-out traveller, and allowed him to stay for the night. In the meantime, George pursued his way, and arrived at home about midnight, his companion putting in an appearance about breakfast time the next morning, to the great delight of the villagers, among whom the story had got wind, and who jocosely enquired if he had had 'a good blow-out?' I need hardly say," observed Ben, "that George was never molested by his waggish neighbour again."

"But it was too bad for the people to let them go from place to place without dinner or supper," I remarked.

"To be sure it was," said Ben; "but then I am not certain but that my old friend was to blame for it in the case I have just given you. Sometimes, however, the people are sadly too careless about such matters, and now and then get a broadish hint or two on the subject. It is not often, however, it is done so neatly and effectually as it was once down in Holderness, by Peter Johnson."

"Oh," said I, "I have often heard queer tales about Peter, let us hear about it."

"Yes, do!" said Timothy.

"Well, then," replied Ben, "as I have got in the humour for story-telling, I may as well let you have it. It was when I lived in Hull. Complaints had been made by some of the local preachers that when they

went to preach at a certain place, a long way from Hull, that the friends there, several of whom were well-to-do people, forgot to ask them to have anything to eat. On hearing this Peter, who was present, said, 'Mr. Chairman, if that's it, plan me. I'll warrant you I'll have some dinner if I go.' Accordingly Peter was appointed on the next plan. Living on the other side of the circuit, he was not in the habit of visiting the village, but his fame having preceded him, he found on his arrival a chapel crowded with people. Quietly entering the pulpit, he divested himself of his top-coat, hat, &c., and taking a black bag with a long string out of the pocket of the former, proceeded very leisurely to hang it upon the nail provided for the preacher's hat, after which he placed his hat upon the same nail. As the bag hung down below the hat, the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fixed upon it. Apparently unconscious of this, the preacher proceeded with the service, until he announced his text, when he observed, 'Now, friends, the text's true: as true as'—pointing to the bag—'as my dinner's hung there!' Then proceeding with his sermon, he continued, until he made some new assertion, when he would again point to the bag, and say, 'Now that's true, I tell you: as true as my dinner's hung there!' When the service ended several persons went up to him and asked him to dine. 'Dine!' said he, 'I thou't there was no dinner to be getten here, so I brought mine with me.' The consequence of this freak was that none of us after that wanted an invitation to dinner."

While writing Ben's stories respecting the abuse

which, half a century ago, and even since then, it was common to heap upon ministers who, in the pursuit of their beneficent work, were necessitated, much against their own wish, and at much personal inconvenience, to "make their homes" among the people, as they journeyed from village to village, we are reminded of an incident which took place some years ago in Lincolnshire. A ministerial friend of ours, a great humourist, on leaving home one day for a week in the country part of his circuit, stepped into a compartment of a railway carriage in which were seated two gents belonging to the commercial world. On taking his seat opposite to them, the minister placed a small black bag by his side, in which he carried a book or two for study, one or two "white chokers," and a few articles of similar character. The train had not proceeded far before one of the gents, winking at his companion, said in a nonchalant tone, "I am told that bacon has advanced considerably in this part of the country of late."

"Indeed," said the other, "I was not aware of it. The fact is, I don't do much in the *bacon* line myself."

"Nor I," said the other; "but I heard it from some of the shopkeepers I do business with."

"How do you account for it? There has not been any epidemic among pigs recently, has there?"

"Not that I have heard of," said the first speaker; "but I heard a country shopkeeper the other day account for it in a somewhat singular way. He attributed the increase in price to the rapid spread of Methodism in this county during the last few years."

"The rapid spread of Methodism!" said the second 'commercial;' "How in the world can that affect the price of bacon? I fail to see the connection between the two."

"Well, it is in this way, as he explained it," was the reply. "The increase of Methodists has opened the way for the employment of a great many more parsons; and these fellows go from village to village, holding forth at night, and staying among the people during the day. You never see one of them leaving home without a black bag with him. While they are away, they feed upon the people's bacon, and beg a slice or two, here and there, until they get their bag filled, then off they go home and gormandise upon it till it is all done, when they go out again on another round; and thus consume such quantities of bacon that the poor folks have very little left for themselves."

While the above conversation was going on, our friend sat reading, apparently unconscious of the shafts of ridicule that were being covertly aimed at him. When, however, there was a pause, he quietly looked up from his book and said, with a slight stammer, which accompanied his conversation, but passed away as soon as he commenced to preach or speak in public: "I be–g your pardon, gent–le–men; but I assure you that you were never under a greater mistake in your lives, if you sup-pose that I ever eat any of the people's bacon. I seldom see it, and nev–ver touch it."

"Oh! we were not referring to *you*," said the 'commercials," simultaneously.

"Now, g–gentlemen, you need not tell any more lies; you have told plen–ty already. You meant *me*, and no–body else. Now, let me assure you again, that the people never ask me to eat *any of their bacon*."

"Then what do they do?" asked one of the travellers.

"They eat the bacon themselves, and save us parsons the hams! I never see anything in the shape of meat on the table but ham, un–less it be beef or bo–i–l–ed chic–ken."

Our friend resumed his reading, and the 'commercials' did not pursue the conversation.

But to return to Ben and our journey. By the time his stories were told, huge drops of rain began to fall. Soon it came down in torrents, and before long we were drenched to the skin. Our companion, who was a wonderful walker, kept stretching away at the rate of nearly five miles an hour, while we half-ran along after him, until we were nearly exhausted. Every now and then he would turn round and say, "Come along, lads, this is nothing to what I have often had to do." At length, Tim threw himself down upon a stone-heap, and exclaimed, "It's no use, I can't go another yard. I'm clean done up." I sat down beside him, and felt as if I must stay there all night. The rain by this time had abated, and Ben, who saw that we really were "dreadfully used up," joined us, and struck up in a cheery tone,

"My soul is now united
To Christ, the living Vine;
His grace I long have slighted,
But now I feel Him mine," &c.

The singing of the last lines of the hymn roused us wonderfully, and we repeated them several times, until our shrewd leader, who knew that we were particularly fond both of the words and tune, seized our arms in his and exclaimed, "Now, lads, let's try again," and rose singing:

"By floods and flames surrounded,
I now my way pursue;
Nor shall I be confounded,
With glory in my view;
I taste a heavenly pleasure,
And need not fear a frown,
Christ is my joy and treasure,
My glory and my crown:"

words in which we heartily joined, and which we sung heartily as we walked along arm in arm. Never had I so realized the meaning of the sentiment:

"Labour is rest, and pain is sweet,
If Thou, my God, art here."

About midnight we reached home, and so ended our first-day's experience of the work of a local preacher.

CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH TIMOTHY RECEIVES SOME SUITABLE ADVICE.

TIMOTHY and I continued to go out with our friend Ben for about six months, at the end of which time the Quarterly Meeting decided that we were qualified to go by ourselves. Accordingly, when the next plan was issued, we found our names on as exhorters. Though appointed separately, yet, at our request, the plan-maker arranged our appointments so as to allow us to accompany each other home from the most distant places. Consequently, it frequently happened that we returned in each other's company. At such times, I generally found Timothy full of excitement respecting his preaching, and disposed to converse freely on the subject. As he was exceedingly fluent, and possessed a considerable share of self-confidence, he soon became popular with the mass of the people, who, led away with the amazing ease with which he poured out a rapid torrent of words, looked upon him as a prodigy. His style was very ambitious, reminding one of a description that has been given of a "dangerous preacher," who is described

as "encompassing himself with rainbows, metaphors, and earthquakes, and cataracts, and hurricanes, and waterspouts, and showers of gems, and torrents of fire, and boundless conflagrations; and marshalled philosophies, and trooping seraphim, and the stupendous wheels of providence, and the silver chiming of the spheres, and the weltering chaos of demolished worlds." He delighted, too, in "out-of-the-way" subjects, and generally selected some curious passage for his text. I recollect his overtaking me one night, soon after we were separated, when the first question he proposed was, "Well, George, and on what particular passage have you been expatiating this evening?"

On my replying that I had been trying to speak a little from the words "Behold I stand at the door and knock," &c., he exclaimed, "George, I'm surprised at you taking such a commonplace passage as that. Why any simpleton could speak from such a text!"

"That," I observed, "was the very reason why I took it."

"Then excuse me, my friend," he replied, "but I should certainly have credited you for possessing more discernment. Don't you see that in order to arrest the attention of your audience, you must announce some striking passage as the subject of your discourse. Unless you do this they are off to sleep instantly. Why, you should have seen my congregation this afternoon, when I gave out my text. They looked round at one another as much as to say, 'Whatever will he make of that?'"

"What was it?" we ventured to ask.

"Oh! a splendid allegorical passage, out of the beautiful Song of Solomon: 'We have a little sister, and she has no breasts; what shall we do for our little sister in the day when she shall be spoken for? If she be a wall we will build on her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.'"

"I don't wonder at their surprise. I fancy they would begin to think that they would have to say, 'We have a little brother, and he has no brains; what shall be done for our little brother? The next time he comes to preach, if he takes such a text again, we will say to our brother, 'Tarry at Jericho until thy beard be grown.'"

"Now none of your banter, my friend," said Tim, "for it won't affect me, I assure you. You may make fun of it, if you like, but the people evidently enjoyed it this afternoon, and so they did this evening."

"And what has been your subject to-night?" we asked.

"Oh, I spoke from the words, 'And thou shalt be called, sought out, a city not forsaken;' and endeavoured to show them that the church of Christ, in its ramifications and divisions, was a city composed of different streets, inhabited by different classes, pursuing different avocations, but all citizens of no mean city. I put the Church of England in King Street, which I endeavoured to show was very wide and full of beautiful houses, though some of them were very old and sadly in need of repair. The Independents I put into High Street, which I showed was a very fine

old street, and contained some substantial residences. The Wesleyans I placed in Middle Street, which I had to prove was not of so grand a character as the other two, but was being widened and beautified very rapidly; while I put ourselves in Gospel Lane, Back Street, where the poor overlooked masses of the people generally reside."

"And where did you put the Baptists, Quakers, and others?"

"Oh, I entirely forgot them!"

"What a pity! It is to be hoped that none of them were there; they might consider themselves insulted, you know."

"Well, so they might, but I do not think that there were any present; besides, one cannot find streets for all of them in the little time allowed for a single discourse."

"I should think not," I replied; "you must put them in next time."

"Well, I can manage to do that. I'm making a sermon on 'Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled,' in which I have the Church in the drawing-room, the Wesleyans in the dining-room, the Independents in the sitting-room, and the poor Primitives in the kitchen; where, I say, that there is the largest fire and the most work. Not a bad hit that, is it?"

"I fancy I have heard something like it before," I remarked; "but you have not yet told me how you are going to dispose of the other denominations I mentioned."

"Well, I think I can find a room for each of them in my house sermon."

"I am afraid you will have a very large house to build before you have done, and if you are not careful your hearers will be confounding one room with another. But seriously, do not you think such a mode of treating passages of Scripture a very improper and dangerous one?"

"Certainly not. What makes you think it is?"

"Because it is attaching a meaning to the particular passage you are professedly explaining it was never meant to convey; a course sadly too common, but one which, in my opinion, we cannot be too careful to avoid. It should be our aim to put before our hearers what we believe to be the mind of the Holy Spirit in the passage; or we make the Bible mean anything, everything, or nothing."

Some time after this, both of us were appointed to a camp-meeting, together with the superintendent minister and two senior local preachers. Timothy's text in the morning was, "The great and terrible day of the Lord." After making what he termed "a few brief but he trusted pertinent remarks," he observed: "Our subject (pronounced *sabject*) is, 'The great and terrible day of the Lord,' and in asking your careful attention to this momentous theme, allow me to direct your thoughts, first, to its antecedents; secondly, to its concomitants; thirdly, to its sequences." His address was in keeping with his divisions, as the following quotations will shew. "The foundation upon which we are to erect the structure of human character and

destiny, and the terms on which we participate in the economy of the universe," &c. "Man has a supermundane spirit—the soul—which permeates it, and enables him to compass the sublimity of his being." "Demosthenes thundered forth his immortal incitations." "If the nature of the Almighty is Manicheistic, of what avail are the sighings and heavings of man after perfection and immutability?"

During our homeward journey the subject of preaching came up for discussion. The minister spoke earnestly but kindly to Timothy, upon the necessity of cultivating a plain and pointed style of address. "For instance," said he, "in your remarks, my young friend, you spoke of the 'antecedents,' 'concomitants,' and 'sequences' of the day of judgment. Now would it not have been much better to have said, 'We shall notice what goes before, what attends, and what follows the judgment?' though I question the wisdom of such a division at all. Do you really suppose, now, that one in ten of the congregation would understand the meaning of those words?"

"Well, I don't suppose they would," said Timothy in a somewhat supercilious tone.

"Indeed! then whatever led you to use such high-sounding words?"

"I don't know. I suppose it's natural for me to do so. Besides, I study to avoid low and vulgar expressions."

"Certainly, and so you should. But there is a great difference between a 'low and vulgar' style, and one which everybody can understand. We can use the one without adopting the other. Wesley did this,

and so did Clark and Richard Watson. Indeed, one leading characteristic of our religious classics is their great simplicity. This has been noticed by our adversaries. One of the bitterest and most sarcastic of them, speaking of the eloquence which is effective, says: 'In addressing the multitude we must remember to follow the advice that Cromwell gave his soldiers—"Fire low." This is the great art of the Methodists. If our eloquence be directed above the heads of our hearers, we shall do no execution. By pointing our arguments low, we stand a chance of hitting their hearts as well as their heads. In addressing angels, we could hardly raise our eloquence too high; but we must remember that men are not angels. Would we warm them by our eloquence, unlike Mahomet's mountain, it must come down to them, since they cannot raise themselves to it. It must come home to their wants and their wishes, to their hopes and fears, to their families and their firesides. The moon gives a far greater light than all the fixed stars put together, although she is much smaller than any of them: the reason is, that the stars are superior and remote, but the moon is inferior, and nearer us. These remarks are as important as they are correct, and it will be well for us to remember them. In preaching to the people, we should try to present truth to them in such a manner that the most ignorant of our hearers may be able to understand us. And to do this, we must try to come down to them.'"

"I'm tired of coming down to them," said Timothy, "let them try to come up to us."

"That would be no very difficult matter, I fancy," drily observed one of our senior brethren; "they would not have far to come to do that."

"But, seriously," said the minister, "the matter is of the greatest importance. For what is the great end of preaching? Is it to afford us an opportunity of magnifying ourselves, or displaying our superior abilities; or is it to save those that hear us? And how can we hope to do this unless they understand us? The apostle Paul speaks to the point on this matter when in writing to the Corinthians, amongst whom were several who were more anxious to possess shining than useful gifts, he says, 'Forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.' Let us who minister in holy things avoid all high-sounding and pompous words, which are of no use to the unlearned, and simply disgust intelligent hearers, who invariably look upon them as indicative of weakness rather than strength, beside exhibiting ignorance of the art of rhetoric. I have read that when Dr. Gregory waited upon Robert Hall with the proof of one of his now celebrated sermons, the great preacher, hearing the word 'penetrate,' exclaimed, 'Penetrate! who put that word in? I never did; out with it, and put in pierce,

it is a hundred times better than penetrate.' On another occasion, hearing the word felicity used, he said, 'I hate your Frenchified phrases. The old Saxon word happiness is worth a thousand felicities.'"

"You remind me," said one brother, "of the remarks of the author of 'Lamps of the Temple,' where, speaking of the early style of a popular preacher, he says that 'his words were all forty-seven pounders, too big for the sentences in which they appeared; they were like large pictures cut down to fit small frames.'"

"I have just been reading the book," said the minister, "and have been very much amused with a smart satire he gives us on what he terms the 'magniloquent and pompous style.'"

"What was that?" was asked; "can you give us it?"

"Well," he replied, "I believe I can give you the substance of it. He takes our beautiful twenty-third Psalm, which as you will remember is in our version composed principally of Saxon words, and translates it into the following high-sounding phraseology. For, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want,' &c., we have, 'Deity is my Pasture, I shall not be indigent. He maketh me to recumb on the verdant lawns, He leadeth me beside the unrippled liquidities; He reinstalleth my spirits, and conducteth me in the avenues of rectitude, for the celebrity of His appellations.' Beautiful, is it not? would not many of our plain country folks gape and stare if any of us were to go off in that style? Just fancy, instead of my saying, 'Yea, though I walk through the valley and the shadow

of death,' &c., I was to say, 'Unquestionably, though I perambulate the glen of the sepulchral dormitories, I will not be perturbed by appalling catastrophes; for Thou art present, Thy wand and Thy crook insinuate delectation;' or for the verses, 'Thou preparest a table,' &c., substitute 'Thou spreadest a refection before me, in the midst of inimitable scrutations; Thou perfumest my locks with odoriferous unguents, my chalice exuberates. Indubitably, benignity and commiseration shall continue all the diuternity of my vitality, and I will eternalize my habitance in the metropolis of nature!'"

"I have no doubt," said our elderly brother, "some of them would think it very grand, and give you credit for being a 'great scholard.' Such preachers remind me of the showman who described to a crowd of rustics the battle of Waterloo. 'In the centre,' said he, 'is the Duke of Wellington, riding upon a white horse, but you cannot see him for the smoke.'"

"Well, let us take care," said our minister, "that we don't hide the Lord Jesus in the smoke, but may we so preach Him, that among all our hearers He may be 'set forth evidently crucified before their eyes.' But here we are at the road which leads to my home. Good night, and may the Master guide us all."

CHAPTER VIII.

IN WHICH TIMOTHY RECEIVES MORE ADVICE.

ONE of Timothy's faults as a preacher, by no means, however, an uncommon one, was an excessive fondness for deriving what he termed *practical lessons* from the most commonplace subjects. This enabled him to show his ingenuity in a way that quite astonished the natives of the country villages. They would express unbounded gratification at the manner in which he would bring *new* meanings out of passages which they had never conceived contained so much as he was able to deduce from them. Once, for instance, we heard him preach from the beautiful passage, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness," &c. &c. He dwelt at considerable length upon the terms "without controversy," and explained, with great earnestness, that the mystery of the Trinity, and the relation of the Three Divine Persons to the work of redemption, was incomprehensible *without* controversy, but *with* controversy all became simple and plain! On another occasion he gave

an exposition of the parable of the Good Samaritan, which we have never forgot. The man who went down to Jericho, was the poor drunkard; the "thieves," among whom he was so unfortunate as to fall, were the publicans; the "priest and Levite," who passed by on the other side (that required no explanation), they were the 'little-drop' *parsons* and classleaders; *the Good Samaritan* was the teetotaler; the *ass* upon which he put the injured man, was the pledge, and the *inn* where he left him to rest and recover himself, was the *Temperance Society!*

Some time after our coming on the plan, a Local Preachers' Bible-class was formed, for the special instruction of young men like ourselves. It was presided over by the ministers, one of whom took special interest in our welfare and improvement. At these meetings the subject of preaching was regularly discussed, and on more occasions than one, special attention was given to that of "The principles of Biblical interpretation." Timothy and myself were specially interested in the latter subject, and frequently walked into the country of an evening to meet the minister on his return from his appointments, and enjoy the benefit of his conversation and advice. The information he communicated, and the cautions he administered, have been of much service to us, and have so materially helped us to *read* and *understand* the Bible, that we make no apology for giving the substance, if not the exact form, of several of those conversations.

"Remember," he said, on one occasion, "that our

principal business is to preach the Word. We are not priests, nor can you young men, while you remain local preachers especially, be pastors. You are expounders of God's Word. Your work is to proclaim the message that it brings. You have not to originate truth, but diffuse it. You are ambassadors for God, and must act in strict accordance with the instructions you have received.

"As to the proper manner of interpreting the Word, let me say that a variety of rules have been laid down by different writers, but I think they may all be embraced under the following modes of interpretation :—the Grammatical, the Allegorical, and the Dogmatical. Of these I will not say much, only that the first simply investigates the *words* of the Bible for the purpose of ascertaining their true meaning; the second maintains that these words, besides their simple and obvious sense, have another which is concealed as behind a picture; while the third endeavours to explain the Bible in harmony with the dogmas of the Church, following the principles of the analogy of the faith. This is done by considering certain articles of the faith to be *Leading Doctrines*, and to regulate and define accordingly the sense of the Bible wherever it appears doubtful and uncertain. This mode has been adopted by the Roman Catholic, Greek, Syrian, Anglican, Protestant, and indeed all churches."

Among the rules he enumerated we distinctly remember the following :—

"*Carefully endeavour to ascertain the exact meaning*

of any passage on which you preach. Unless you do this, you will fail to rightly divide the word of God, and be in danger of interpreting the Bible as fancy may lead or prejudice dictate.

"You should ask, for instance, whether the words are to be understood literally or figuratively; whether they refer to this life or the life which is to come. For instance, many preachers in explaining different passages in the prophecies and in the book of Revelation, explain those which evidently refer to the privileges of the members of the church on earth, as if they referred only, or principally, to the enjoyments of the redeemed in heaven. While others fall into the opposite error, and explain those promises of good which are made to the righteous, as if they were to be literally fulfilled in the present life. A moderate amount of attention would, we think, prevent men of ordinary capacities from falling into such errors as these.

"*It is also important,*" said he, "to distinguish between the sober prose of Scripture narrative, and the poetic descriptions with which the Bible abounds.

"In his notes on that beautiful piece of ancient poetry, David's lament for Saul and Jonathan, Dean Stanley observes that it furnishes 'a good instance of the judgment which we ought to form of poetical language, whether in the Bible or out of it, and of the mistakes into which we fall if we measure it by the common rules of prose. That pathetic curse which David invoked on the mountains of Gilboa, was by the simple pilgrims who first visited Palestine under-

stood as if it was common prose; and accordingly, when the Crusaders passed by Mount Gilboa, they were surprised to find that there was dew and rain to be found where the Royal Prophet had declared that there should be none. In this instance we are able to see their mistake. But it is one which we are often liable to commit, sometimes in our interpretation of the Bible, sometimes in our interpretation of one another's conduct. Let us take warning by the nonsense into which the old pilgrims would, by such a mode of misunderstanding, have turned this beautiful song, to be aware of similar misapprehensions elsewhere. Poetry is poetry, and prose is prose. Each must be valued, honoured, and interpreted, both in the Bible and in human character, by the light of its own sphere, and by the measure of its own requirements.'

"You should also avoid making a passage to mean more than it was really intended to teach. I have read, for example, of a minister who in preaching from the passage, '*He was little of stature*,' said: 'We shall consider, (1) the word *he*, which acquaints us with the nature of the person; (2) the word *was*, which will teach us the frailty of life; (3) the word *little*, which tells us of the personal appearance of Zaccheus.' This promising division being suitably dealt with, the application of the whole was given in two lessons: (1) God takes care of the *little* (the little being explained wholly in relation to physical littleness); (2) it is necessary to *compensate by our virtues* for our *personal failures*.

"A preacher belonging to the *Profound Significance* school, preaching on *Luke* x. 30, said, 'Mark, my brethren, we have here an example of *decision of character*. *A certain* man, &c. Observe, he was a *certain* man, *he knew what he was about.*' The Millerities, threatening the end of the world, maintained that the 'chariots' that 'jostle each other, and run like the lightnings,' as mentioned in *Nahum* ii. 3, 4, meant railway carriages; and in particular, the words, 'the fir trees shall be terribly shaken,' referred to the profuse cutting down of fir trees for railway sleepers!

"Dr. J. Pye Smith gives as an example of this mode of interpreting Scripture, the following passage: 'The ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly,' *Isaiah* xxx. 7. 'This,' says he, 'has been adduced as a description of the distress which ministers of the gospel, the messengers of revealed mercy, have so much reason to feel in contemplating the small success of their endeavours to bring men to repentance and salvation. Just and important as is this sentiment, it is perfectly alien from the real sense of the passage. It is a clause in a picturesque description of the universal consternation which filled the nation of Judah when Sennacherib was entering it with his irresistible army, spreading desolation all around. Hezekiah had previously paid an enormous fine (equal to more than £268,000 sterling) as the penalty for his having endeavoured to free his country from the yoke of tribute, and in order to buy off the threatening conqueror from his menaced invasion. For this consideration, Sennacherib had entered into a treaty of

peace. But no sooner had he received this vast sum, than he avowed his unprincipled and treacherous purpose, and gave orders for the march of his troops into the helpless territory. Hezekiah's ambassadors, called also "valiant ones," since they were probably officers of rank,—the same, perhaps, who had negociated the treaty, and who might have been sent again to remonstrate against the proud Assyrian,—finding that he had neither clemency nor honour, and that their mission was utterly unsuccessful, returned to Jerusalem, and reported their failure with the most passionate emotions of grief and despair. "Behold! their valiant ones cry out; *the ambassadors of peace weep bitterly;* . . he (Sennacherib) hath broken the covenant, he despiseth the cities, he regardeth no man."'

"Such perversions of the pulpit as those we have just given, are, we fear, by no means so rare as many would suppose. Let us seek to avoid anything like even an approach to them; for though we may not be in danger of committing such glaring errors, we are by no means free from the danger of perverting or altering the meaning of Scripture, as could be easily shown by a reference to some of the texts which are frequently preached from in our pulpits, and an account of the manner in which they are generally handled. Such a course is calculated to destroy our reverence for the Word of God, which 'instead of being a rule of life or faith, becomes the expression of the ever-changing aspect of religious opinions.'"

"But," asked Timothy, "are we not at liberty to take striking passages of Scripture, and apply them

to new and important purposes, upon a principle of accommodation?"

"Permit me," said our instructor, "to answer this question by asking another: 'Are we at liberty to put any meaning upon the Word of God different from its own proper, designed, and genuine sense, as ascertained by competent investigation?' I can only imagine one way in which such accommodations can be permitted by a conscientious mind, and that is the existence of some resemblance or analogy, either in the phraseology or in the sentiment, in the case proposed. If the analogy be in the former, the citation is merely in the same way in which men often quote a line of poetry, and apply it to any new occasion: yet it should be recollected, that in so applying a fine passage of Milton or Cowper, for instance, we can do no harm; we can lead no one into error by it; the new application is never supposed to have been the original intention of the author. But, since the Scriptures are the repository of God's revelation, to which all Christians justly look for the authoritative declarations of eternal truth and religious obligations, it is evidently a far more serious matter for us to quote Scriptural passages, even in an incidental way. It is almost certain that most hearers and readers will imagine that the transient citation, or the felicitous allusion, is mentioned *as evidence* in the particular respect for which it is adduced. To say the least, therefore, we ought not to indulge in this practice without taking especial care to guard against being misapprehended.

"In the other case supposed, that *of an analogy of sentiment*, there is, we venture to think, a perfectly safe and legitimate way in which we may proceed. Perhaps there are not in Scripture any recitals of fact, or traits of character, or precepts or other declarations given under specific circumstances, which, on due consideration, are not most truly to be regarded as *cases of some general principle;* particular instances, under some one great class of doctrinal truth or moral reasoning, or the conduct of the Divine dispensations. We can, therefore, from the particular instance ascend to the general principle; and that principle being established by its own evidence, we can bring it down to any new case which appears to fall within its range. For example, we may take *Isa.* xxxiii. 14, 'The sinners in Sion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who amongst us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?' The connection refers to the deliverance of Hezekiah and his people, who trusted in God, from their Assyrian invaders, and from the machinations of the traitorous and idolatrously-inclined party at home. Against them the judgments of heaven are denounced in verses 11 and 12, under the frequent figure of 'devouring fire': and in this passage the detected faction, upon the defeat of their projects, and the discovery of their treasons, are described as stricken with terror and despair. Here, then, is a single instance under a general class; and it illustrates a *principle*, namely, the certainty of Divine justice in the punishment of the impenitent and hypocritical,

according to their deserts. The *universal principle*, therefore, can be adduced, confirmed, and enforced, as equally claiming the regard of mankind, at all times, and under every variety of circumstances. If these enemies of their country had so much reason to be afraid, what dread should possess rebels and traitors against the law and gospel of God? The prophet immediately proceeds to declare the security of the righteous in the midst of the judgments which fall upon the wicked; and thus he supplies us with an exemplification of another great principle in the moral government of God, which we may safely apply to the widest extent.

"Dr. J. Pye Smith furnishes us with another example of this kind from *Isa.* i. 2–17. 'In this passage,' says he, 'the prophet draws a picture of the prevailing corruption of the Jewish nation under the reign of Ahaz; the licentiousness of the princes, the avarice and oppressiveness of the higher orders, the general depravity of all ranks, and the hypocrisy with which they performed the services of the temple. He then exhorts them to a change of mind and conduct, and adds, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Here, then, we have a determined case, an illustrative instance; it leads us up to a principle, and from that principle we should never yield to the temptation to give untrue interpretations of any part of God's most sacred Word, in order to have materials for any kind of religious exhortation. We may make

striking allusions, and avail ourselves of forcible and pungent Scripture expressions, to as great an extent as any faithful preacher can wish, and yet not sacrifice the genuine meaning. That genuine meaning we should always make clear,—*it is the mind of Christ:* let us not have the presumption to think that we can improve it; but when, as will usually be the fact, it is found to involve some great and general principle, let us enforce that principle in all its variety of application, 'for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.'"

Our limits will not allow us to quote at length our friend's counsels and warnings on the subject of the metaphorical interpretation of Scripture. There is, however, the less need for this, as such preaching is becoming more and more uncommon among our churches. Time was, indeed, when the professed interpreters of Scripture saw a hidden meaning in almost every passage. The two wives of Jacob, Leah and Rachel, have been interpreted as types of the two dispensations, the Jewish and Christian. The two goats, on the day of atonement, types of the two advents of Christ. The twelve bells upon the robes of the high priest, types of the twelve apostles. While with respect to the cross, it has been supposed to be typified everywhere: in the tree of knowledge, in the rod of Aaron; and not only in the Scriptures, but also in nature: as in the horn of the unicorn, in the human countenance, in the posture of a man engaged in prayer, in a vessel with its sails, in the plough, in the hammer, in the mark on the back of the ass, and elsewhere. Indeed,

there is no end to the absurd interpretations of Scripture which those who have adopted the allegorical style of preaching have fallen into. "You will easily," said our minister, "be preserved from such errors by keeping constantly in mind the rule I have already laid down, that is, to carefully ascertain the exact grammatical sense of a passage, and avoid making it express more than it was intended to teach."

Before we bring this chapter to a conclusion, we cannot refrain from furnishing the reader with the following amusing and trenchant satire on the method of preaching of which Timothy was so fond, and to which we have referred in the opening of this chapter. It is entitled "A Model Sermon," and appeared some time ago in a London periodical, the name of which we cannot ascertain. The sermon is founded on the well-known nursery rhyme,—

"Old Mother Hubbard, she went to the cupboard,
To get her poor dog a bone;
But when she got there, the cupboard was bare,
And so the poor dog had none."

And thus proceeds :—

These beautiful words, dear friends, carry with them a solemn lesson. I propose this evening to analyze their meaning, and to attempt to apply it, lofty as it may be, to our everyday life.

"Old Mother Hubbard, she went to the cupboard,
To get her poor dog a bone."

Mother Hubbard, you see, was old; there being no mention of others, we may presume that she was alone—a widow; a friendless, old, solitary widow. Yet did she despair? Did she sit down and weep, or read a novel, or wring her hands? No; *she went to the cupboard.* And here observe that she *went* to the cupboard. She did not hop, or skip, or run, or jump, or use any other peripatetic artifice; she solely and merely *went* to the cupboard.

We have seen that she was old and lonely, and we now further

see that she was poor. For, mark, the words are "the cupboard." Not "one of the cupboards," or the "right-hand cupboard," or the "left-hand cupboard," or the one above, or the one below, or the one under the floor; but just *the* cupboard—the one humble little cupboard the poor widow possessed. And why did she go to the cupboard? Was it to bring forth golden goblets, or glittering precious stones, or costly apparel, or feasts, or any other attributes of wealth? *It was to get her poor dog a bone!* Not only was the widow poor, but her dog, the sole prop of her age, was poor too. We can imagine the scene. The poor dog crouching in a corner, looking wistfully at the solitary cupboard, and the widow going to that cupboard, in hope, in expectation, may be—to open it—although we are not distinctly told that it was not half open or ajar—to open it for that poor dog.

"But when she got there, the cupboard was bare,
And so the poor dog had none."

When she got there! You see, dear brethren, what perseverance is. You see the beauty of persistence in doing right. *She got there.* There were no turnings and twistings, no slippings and slidings, no leaning to the right, or falterings to the left. With glorious simplicity we are told *she got there.*

And how was her noble effort rewarded?

The cupboard was bare! It was bare! There were to be found neither apples nor oranges, nor cheesecakes, nor penny buns, nor gingerbread, nor crackers, nor nuts, nor lucifer matches. The cupboard was bare! There was but one, only one solitary cupboard in the whole of that cottage, and that one, the sole hope of the widow, and the glorious loadstar of the poor dog, was bare! Had there been a leg of mutton, a loin of lamb, a fillet of veal, even an ice from Gunter's, the case would have been different, the incident would have been otherwise. But it was bare, my brethren, bare as a bald head, bare as an infant born without a caul.

Many of you will probably say, with all the pride of worldly sophistry, "The widow, no doubt, went out and bought a dog-biscuit." Ah, no! Far removed from these earthly ideas, these mundane desires, poor Mother Hubbard, the widow, whom many thoughtless worldlings would despise, in that she only owned one cupboard, perceived—or I might even say saw—at once the relentless logic of the situation, and yielded to it with all the heroism of that nature which had enabled her without deviation to reach the barren cupboard. She did not

attempt, like the stiff-necked scoffers of this generation, to war against the inevitable. She did not try, like so-called men of science, to explain what she did not understand. She did nothing. "Poor dog had none!" And then, at this point, our information ceases. But do we not know sufficient? Are we not cognizant of enough?

Who would dare to pierce the veil that shrouds the ulterior fate of old Mother Hubbard, her poor dog, the cupboard, or the bone that was not there? Must we imagine her still standing at the open cupboard door, depict to ourselves the dog still drooping his disappointed tail upon the floor, the sought-for bone still remaining somewhere else? Ah, no, my dear brethren; we are not so permitted to attempt to read the future. Suffice it for us to glean from this beautiful story its many lessons; suffice it for us to apply them, to study them as far as in us lies, and, bearing in mind the natural frailty of our nature, to avoid being widows; to shun the patronymic of Hubbard; to have, if our means afford it, more than one cupboard in the house; and to keep stores in them all. And oh, dear friends, keeping in recollection what we have learned this day, let us avoid keeping dogs that are fond of bones. But, brethren, if we do—if Fate has ordained that we should do any of these things, let us then go, as Mother Hubbard did, straight, without curveting or prancing, to our cupboard, empty though it be; let us, like her, accept the inevitable with calm steadfastness; and should we, like her, ever be left with a hungry dog and an empty cupboard, may future chroniclers be able to write also of us, in the beautiful words of our text—

"And so the poor dog had none."

CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH TIMOTHY TURNS A WESLEYAN.

SOME time after the events mentioned in the last chapter, I left home for the work of the regular ministry. As my circuit was not more than fifty miles away, I frequently paid a visit to my native town. On such occasions Timothy and I generally spent as much time as we could in each other's society. For a while I found him wonderfully delighted with his work, and on intimate terms with the ministers, of whom he spoke most eulogistically. They were the cleverest men in the world, &c. &c. After a time, however, I found that his zeal had abated, and his admiration considerably declined. Walking with him along the sands, during one of my visits, I ventured to hint that I feared he was not so happy as he had been, and inquired if anything had happened to mar his peace. After some hesitation, he confessed he was not so comfortable as formerly, and that he had felt unsettled for some time. On my asking the cause of this, he replied: "Well, the fact is, my dear friend, I begin to fear that I am scarcely in my right sphere.

I have not room for my abilities, and feel that my most elaborate efforts in the matter of sermonizing are thrown away. You know me too well to suppose that I can rest satisfied with anything *mediocre* or commonplace. But, then, you know also, as well as I do, that our people, especially in the country villages, are deplorably ignorant; and I am sorry to say they are not much better in the town. Then look at our preachers. There's old N——, for instance; he's a mere windbag, and does not give you a new idea in a twelvemonth. As for poor G——, why it's a shame for such a fellow to be in the ministry. I declare I consider it a positive violation of the Sabbath to go to hear him preach! Indeed, I have refrained from doing so for some time now, and stay at home to study, whenever he is planned in."

"I am sorry to hear it," I observed. "We should not forget the assembling of ourselves together. Besides, you should remember that if he does not suit you he will probably suit some one else. By what I can hear, he is very much liked."

"Yes, that's what disgusts me. The people seem quite enamoured of his preaching: a proof of their want of sense. The fact is, they don't know a decent discourse when they hear one. Why, actually, the last time I was planned, half of them were asleep; and one or two of them had the impertinence to tell me that I was 'over long by half.'"

"It certainly was not very polite of them; but how long did you preach?"

"Well, about an hour."

"And it was in the afternoon, when a class meets after the preaching-service, and is attended chiefly by servant-girls, who have to be in soon after four o'clock. I certainly am not much surprised at their being annoyed; and, under the circumstances, you should make some allowance."

"Well, perhaps I should," he replied; "but they are not the only persons who treat me contemptuously. The preachers are very little better. Why look here," said he, taking a new plan from his pocket, "our plans are just out, and—would you believe it?—I am only planned to preach behind chairs, and in the smallest country places, and have not so much as a single appointment in the town-chapel; while Smith, who is, as you know, a regular muff, and Brown, who has but one sermon, whatever may be his text, are both planned on Sunday evenings! The whole thing is intolerable."

"Come, come," I said, "this will never do. The ministers have not intended to slight you. Besides, every man must go into the small villages in his turn."

"It's all very well," said Tim; "but the fact is, they will not catch me giving every spare hour of my time to prepare for my pulpit duties, if my labours are to be confined to clowns and clodhoppers. You may start," for he saw I was about to speak, "but I'll assure you I mean it."

"More's the pity," I replied. "And as for clowns and clodhoppers, as you term them, remember that they have souls to be saved as well as the people in towns, and somebody must go and preach to them."

"Then let them go who are fit for nothing better," said he; "for the fact is, everything like intellectual effort is thrown away upon them. It was only a week or two ago that I was planned at B——, when I preached a sermon on the 'Spirituality of God' which cost me more than a month to prepare. I had done pretty well, I opined, when, as we were leaving the chapel, old F——, the leader, saluted me with 'I'll tell thee what, if thou can't preach without pulling the Bible to pieces, thou had better stop away, for we don't want thee again.' 'Pulling the Bible to pieces!' I asked, 'what do you mean?' 'Mean,' said he, 'I mean what I say. We don't want anybody preaching here who does not believe in the Bible.' 'Why what did I say,' I asked, 'that in any way contradicted the teachings of the inspired volume?' 'Say! why plenty. Didn't thou say that God was not a being, and that He had not eyes, and ears, and arms, and so on?' 'What I said was this,' I replied, 'that God was not a corporeal being: not a structure of matter; not a visible substance. That He does not possess a body, nor consist of various parts extended one without and beyond another; and that it should be our concern to divest our minds of all low and unphilosophical notions of our Maker, and form correct ideas of His abstract and spiritual existence.' But all was of no use. He declared that because I said, that when the Scriptures spoke of God as stretching out His arm, or that His eyes run to and fro in all the earth, we were not to suppose that God had a bodily arm, or real eyes,

I had contradicted the Bible: and 'that for his part he would believe what the Bible said.' When I asked him what kind of a body he supposed God had, he said, 'Well, I suppose God's just like thou and me, nobbut He's a spirit.' After that I left him, and resolved that the next time I was planned at that village he should preach himself."

"That was a very foolish resolution," I remarked, "and one which I hope you will not adhere to. You have forgotten, I fear, the advice of our old friend Mr. L——, who recommended us to try to come down to people, and remember what the apostle says, 'Mind not high things; but condescend to men of low estate.'"

"I am tired of condescending; but I will give you another instance, and then you can judge whether I have not cause for annoyance. A short time ago, Mr. R—— was unwell, and came to our office to see if I would go and take his appointment, as he had no opportunity of acquainting the people of his indisposition. We were not very busy, so I took the afternoon train, and made my way to a Mr. Milner's, to inquire of him where I had to stay. On reaching the door, and knocking, it was opened by a little girl, who exclaimed, before ever she saw me, 'Come in, if your nose be clean.' *

"Overlooking the insult, I asked, 'Does Mr. Milner live here?' when judge of my surprise at hearing a gruff voice exclaim, 'No, *Mr.* Milner does not, but

* I have ascertained that the naughty little puss supposed it was her brother returning from school, and that he has knocked to tease her.

Jim Milner does; what is it you want with him?' 'I am come from Gringleby to supply the place of Mr. R——,' I remarked, 'and I understood this was his home. Will it be convenient for you to accommodate me, as I am a perfect stranger in this vicinity?' 'Bless me,' said the rough fellow, 'what a lot of palaver. Come in! We can do with you, if you can eat muck and lig on straw!'

"I walked in and sat down. After a little conversation, he said: 'My wife is from home, and so you are going to Mr. Nicholsby's, an old gentleman in whose kitchen we preach. So if you are ready I will go on the road with you, and show you the way.' After walking a little distance with me, he pointed me a large farm-house, and said, 'That's the place; you'll find the old gentleman at home, I don't doubt.'

"On reaching the house I was shown into the room where an elderly man was sat, reading the newspaper. For some time he took not the least notice of me; but kept reading on, stopping every now and then to express his rage, which he did audibly, against the new coalition government which had just been formed. At length looking at me, he said, 'And what's the reason Mr. R—— has sent you, instead of coming himself?'

"Mr. R—— was indisposed," I replied.

"'Indisposed, indeed! That's a nice state of things to get to. So, because he's *not disposed* to come to this outside place, he misses us like this, or sends us anybody he can pick up to supply his place. It's twelve weeks now since we saw him. Tell him from

me, when you see him, that perhaps the next time he comes this way, I shall not be *disposed* to give him anything to eat.'

"'I beg pardon,' I said, 'but I fear you scarcely apprehend my meaning. The reason Mr. R—— has not come, is not because he is *not* disposed to come, but because he's indisposed.'

"'Well, what's the difference?' said the old gentleman; 'if he's not disposed, he isn't disposed.'

"'Mr. R—— is suffering from a severe bronchial affection,' I replied, 'which renders him quite inadequate for the performance of his regular duties.'

"'Bless me, lad,' he said, 'talk English, wilt thou? We none of us know French here!'

"I was beginning to feel very uncomfortable, when an elderly, motherly-looking woman came into the room. Turning to her, the old gentleman said, 'Wife, I wish thou would take this young fellow under hand, and see if thou can make owt of him; he beats me clean.'

"'Never mind him,' said the old lady to me, 'he's always running his rigs with the young preachers. But how is it that Mr. R—— has not come? Is he badly?'

"'Yes,' I replied, 'he's suffering from a very bad cold indeed.'

"'Badly!' said the old man, 'then why couldn't you say so when you first came in? I thought you said he was not disposed to come.'

"I turned the conversation as well as I could. After a little while the old lady asked, 'What countryman are you?'

"'Gringleby,' I said, 'is the place where I had the privilege of first beholding the light of day; and it has been my place of residence ever since.'

"'Bless me!' said she, 'I thowt by your talk that you were a Lunnoner.'

"'I thou't,' said the old man, 'you were an Italian, and wondered what you'd done with your hurdy-gurdy.'

"Just then a servant came in to lay the cloth for tea, when, I must say, we had a most sumptuous repast. They pressed me to stay all night, but I declined as politely as I could, and returned by the mail-train. I called at Mr. R——'s, and when I told him of the treatment I had met with, he positively burst into a loud laugh."

I did not wonder at the preacher's mirth, for I knew very well that the old gentleman had been amusing himself with Timothy after his regular fashion. I remember going once under circumstances similar to those under which Timothy went. As I drew near the house, who should I meet but Mr. N—— himself, mounted on his favourite pony. When he had ascertained who I was, he said, "A nice fellow thou looks for a parson; why thou seems far more likely to make a scarecrow of than owt else. Whatever have they been thinking of to send thee? Why, I'll warrant now, that of three questions I ask thee, thou can't answer one."

"What are they?" I asked.

"Well, these. Why does a farmer dislike to see, first, an ash-tree in a hedge-row; secondly, a big

dog under the kitchen table; thirdly a great hole in a haystack? Now if thou can't answer any of these, I'll not let thee preach in our kitchen."

"Well," I replied, "I don't see anything so very difficult in the questions, though I'm not certain I can answer them. But I suppose you don't like an ash-tree in a hedge-row, because it keeps off the sun and rain from so large a space of ground, rendering it next to useless."

"Well, that's not so bad," said he; "now for the second."

"Well, the men like a big dog under a kitchen table, whether the master does or not, I judge, for they can throw it all the fat meat they don't care to eat."

"Thou'st not such a fool as thou looks," was his reply. "Now then for the third and last."

"Well, who likes to see a great hole in a haystack? for it shows that a great deal of hay is used."

"Capital!" said the old man, springing from his pony, and, ringing the bell, the door was instantly opened by a servant, to whom he said, "Here, my lass, take this young fellow's bag, and get us a stunning good cup of tea ready by the time we have looked round." He then turned to me and said, "Come along, my hearty, I want to show you one of the best crop of turnips you ever saw in your life." I saw it was useless to remonstrate, so trotted along by the side of his pony; while he sought to initiate me into the mysteries of drilling and draining, &c. When we sat down to tea he said, "Now make your-

self at home;" and proceeded to tell me a story about "a young chap that once came to preach," whom he frightened so that he beat a hasty retreat, and could never be prevailed upon to show himself again; laughing during the recital, until he seemed in danger of choking himself.

I told Timothy the old gentleman had only been trying to frighten him, and that he was one of the best friends the preachers anywhere met with; but the explanation did not appear to satisfy him. He declared that such conduct was "intolerable, and that he, for one, was not disposed to submit to it." After urging him to learn to put up with such little inconveniences, and to be "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," I left him, deeply grieved at the spirit he had displayed, but hoping that the feeling of annoyance would soon pass away.

But I was doomed to disappointment, as the following extract will show:—

"You will be surprised, and, I doubt not, pained, to hear that I have left our, or as I must now say, 'your,' society. I felt pained myself to be necessitated to do so; but for some time I have been convinced that the manner in which I was being treated must eventuate in my taking such a course. As I told you, when you were over, I was not properly appreciated. I could not but be cognizant of the fact that I possessed some little ability, and I certainly was not disposed to abdicate my true sphere to please a set of noodles. Consequently, I sent in my plan, resigning

at the same time my membership. I must confess that the ministers have treated me with every consideration, and urged me to continue where I was, but my course was determined. I have joined the Wesleyans, and meet in Mr. W——'s class. *He* is a gentleman; and so are the members with whom I associate. I never was treated with so much kindness in my life; and with all due respect to yourself, for whom I will assure you my friendship is as ardent as ever, and I trust will ever continue so, I must say I feel quite a sensation of relief at the idea that I shall not have to continue my ministrations among a class of people who, with but few exceptions, are so dreadfully ignorant and impolite, but shall have the opportunity of labouring, in my feeble manner, among those who at least will be able to appreciate any efforts of an intellectual character I may be able to put forth. I expect, all being well, my name will appear as a full local preacher on the next *Wesleyan Plan*, of which I will send you a copy as soon as they are issued."

CHAPTER X.

IN WHICH TIMOTHY TURNS SEVERAL SOMERSAULTS.

AS Timothy expected, his name appeared on the next Wesleyan plan, and for about a year he professed to be very much at home; but at the end of that period, I found he was again beginning to be restless and dissatisfied. In one of his letters, he stated that he felt "considerable disquietude respecting our system of church government, which I am afraid is anything but an approximation to that which prevailed in apostolic times." In his next, he informed me that he had been to hear Everett and Dunn, and was compelled to confess that he could not question "the invulnerability of their arguments." He had "a premonition that his presence at their meeting would be obnoxious to the sacerdotal hierarchy, who would gladly have all power vested in their own caste;" but he was happy "to believe that the days had disappeared when the laity would willingly permit Christendom to be under the governance of prelatic hierophants." He not only attended Reform meetings, but introduced

the questions in dispute wherever he went, both in season and out of season; and, not content with this, he took a prominent part in organizing and addressing public meetings, at which he expressed, in no measured terms, his sympathy with the movement. When spoken to on the subject, he vehemently protested against the attempt to abridge his individual liberty, and refused to cease his opposition. At length he was summoned to answer for his conduct at a leaders' meeting, when, instead of attending and explaining or defending his conduct, he sent in his plan, with a note "resigning his connection with a sect which, in his humble opinion, was more intolerant, despotic, tyrannical and inexorable than the Church of Rome itself."

On leaving the Wesleyans, Timothy became a "Reformer," and for awhile worshipped with a few others who held similar views to his own, in a room hired for the purpose. "It is not until now," he wrote me, "that I have learnt what true liberty in ecclesiastical matters is. Here I find no coercion or compulsion. No attempt to cram a code of merely connexional laws down one's throat. We have no tyrannical disciplinarian riding rough-shod over us; no ambitious layman ruling the roost. We are all free men and brothers, who don't believe in allowing a priest, or anyone else, to dictate to us, and compel us to do just what he wishes, *nolens volens*. We have been emancipated and disenthralled, and do not intend to be again entangled with the yoke of bondage."

Timothy's "rejoicing" in his new-found liberty

lasted, however, but a very little while; for not more than six months had elapsed before I found, during a short visit that he paid me, that he had ceased to attend the services in connection with the Reformers. On my expressing regret that such was the case, he assured me that he had had "quite enough of that kind of thing." "The fact is," said he, "the practice of letting every member have an equal share in managing church-matters may sound very well in theory, but answers very badly when reduced to actual experiment. If all were persons of intelligence and culture, it might succeed. Anyhow, it does not suit me. There is no consanguinity between me and the majority of our members. Indeed, though I feel ashamed to confess it, there is scarcely any intelligence among them. There are a few men of capacity and astuteness in your society, but really, where I have been lately, the mental obtuseness and anility are beyond the conception of those who are not acquainted with it. As for the preaching, oh dear! oh dear! It's positively dreadful. Such shallowness and puerility you never listened to. It would be a severe punishment for burglary, to make a poor fellow sit under the ill-imagined and egregious nonsense I have been compelled to listen to lately; but I have done with it, I'm thankful to say."

"I am sorry to hear you speak in the way you do of your fellow-Christians," I observed, "and cannot but believe but that you misrepresent them. I for one do not think that there is so much difference between the average members of the different com-

munities as you seem to think there is. I know several Reformers, and am certain that the majority of them are men of intelligence and religious worth. As to the merits of the unhappy controversy, the less we say on that subject the better. No doubt there have been errors on both sides; one party being too ready to find fault and condemn, and the other too ready to take offence at the least criticism. But let me exhort you, my friend, to guard against a tendency which I have been pained to see growing upon you: namely, that of undervaluing plain, earnest, sensible people. Remember that what the church, as well as the world needs, is not that her 'every member' should possess uncommon abilities, but that all should consecrate their talents, be they many or few, to the service of the Master. Few stations in life require more than an ordinary share of cleverness to enable a man to perform his duties creditably. Bright and sparkling parts, says old Seed, 'are like diamonds, which may adorn the wearer, but are not necessary for their or others' comfort; whereas common sense is like current coin, we have occasion for it in the ordinary occurrences of every-day life.' If you do not join a society until all the members come up to your ideal, you will be a religious vagrant all the days of your life."

Timothy did not for some time after this connect himself with any religious society, or regularly attend any particular place of worship, but wandered about like a sheep without a shepherd; "picking up a mental meal where he best could." In the meanwhile,

he began to take a prominent part in municipal and local matters, and was very active in forming a Ratepayers' Association, for the defence of the people's rights and liberties. At public meetings, which were held weekly to denounce the "oppressors" of the people, he was one of the principal orators, and acted as secretary of the association. For awhile again he was most enthusiastic in his support of the movement, but soon grew weary of "the squabbling and wrangling that took place at every business meeting, and was glad to get out of it."

At length, I was pleased to find that he appeared to be getting more settled. The Independents had built a chapel in the town, which was opened during one of my visits. Seeing the name of one of the most popular ministers of the body announced as the preacher for a week-day afternoon and night, I persuaded Timothy to accompany me and hear him. The sermon was a delightful one, and quite fascinated my friend, who accompanied me again in the evening, when we had another rich treat from the words, "O taste and see that the Lord is good." He was so taken up with the services, that he took a sitting and became a regular attendant. In writing me, he said, "I am wonderfully enamoured of Mr. S——'s preaching. He is a splendid fellow—so intelligent and discriminating. His sermons are models of composition: such depth of thought; cogency of reasoning; brilliancy of idea; and containing, withal, a degree of nice perceptive tact, combined with an analytical and synthetical power such as I never before met with.

They assist me wonderfully in my efforts to cogitate, and send me home disposed for pensive meditation and self-communing. I begin to think that I have found a home at last, where I hope I shall be happy and settled." We hoped so too, and prayed that he might continue "steadfast in the faith."

CHAPTER XI.

IN WHICH TIMOTHY'S "VIEWS" GET TWISTED AGAIN, AND HE TAKES ANOTHER TURN.

TIMOTHY continued moderately quiet among the Independents for the long space of two years. True, he was not all that time without some doubts and misgivings, or as he put it, "not entirely free from dubitation and dilemma." He was not "so credulous as to receive as accredited and indisputable every tenet and dogma that prevailed in the current popular belief." He ventured to demur to the adage, "*vox populi, vox Dei.*" While not anxious to "cynically despise the thinkings of others," he was "studiously endeavouring to fabricate a theological formula from his own consciousness." Some idea of his pursuits at this period may be formed from the following extract: "I have not been very first-class recently. Since I last saw you I have suffered from nervousness and languor. And no wonder, considering my mental extravagances, for I often burn a couple of candles after I go to bed, in reading. I have gone carefully through several first-class volumes since you were here [here follows a list of books]. I

have written extensively and critically, and fancy I could supply matter for a volume to the extent of three hundred pages. Such a work as I could furnish is very much needed, and might be much appreciated because of its pertinency and power.

"We have a very clever Baptist minister come to reside here. He and I have met a few times, and had some sharpish tussles on the subject of Baptism. His arguments have somewhat shaken me, and I should like to read something that would be calculated to settle my mind, one way or the other. Have you anything you can loan me for a few weeks? If so, despatch them as expeditiously as possible. I wish for more than an *ex parte* view of the subject, and am anxious to give his reverence *quid pro quo* next time I meet him. But I must suspend. Excuse the blunders in this impromptu; you know how the *cacoëthes scribendi* seizes me whenever I take up my pen to write to you."

I sent him the works of Carson, Thorne, and one or two others, who had written on the subject of Baptism, with a note urging him to do nothing hastily, but to seek for guidance from the Giver of that wisdom which cometh from above. He dropped me a line, thanking me for the volumes, and for my "well-intentioned hint respecting the danger of precipitancy," but at the same time reminding me of the adage, "delays are dangerous;" and that, like David, his motto was, "I made haste and delayed not to keep Thy commandments." A few weeks afterwards, I was agreeably surprised on my return home from an

appointment, to find him awaiting my return. He stated that he had been in a very indifferent state of health; and having taken a few days for rest and recreation, had determined to spend them with me.

During the evening, I enquired how they were "getting on at Spring Street," when he said, "Oh, I do not go there now!" "Indeed," I exclaimed, "I thought you would never have deserted Mr. S——." "Well," he replied, "and I once thought so too; but it was a matter of conscience, not personal predilection with me. Having examined the subject, I came to the conclusion that Christ had enforced upon all His disciples the necessity of taking up their cross and following Him."

"Certainly," I said, "that is the duty of all who profess to serve Christ; but I thought you had come to that conclusion years ago."

"Well, yes, I did in a sense, but not completely; as I did not fully understand the extent of the obligation. For instance, I had not followed my Lord and Master fully, by being buried with Him in baptism."

"Did not you do this when you put off the old man and his deeds, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness?"

"Not to the extent required in the New Testament. But I am happy to say I have done so now."

"That is to say, if I understand you right, you have been immersed?"

"Just so! And that, my dear friend, is what I am exceedingly anxious that you should do. For how can you be saved if you deliberately refuse to obey one

of the most solemn and sacred commands of our Divine Lord?"

"But I am not conscious that I am disobeying any command of our Lord's," I replied.

"Not disobeying a command of our Lord's!" exclaimed Timothy, "when He has plainly said, 'He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned'! Oh, my dear friend, I would not stand in your shoes as an unbaptised person for the whole world. No, not for ten thousand worlds!"

"Steady! steady!" I replied. "You are going a little too fast, old fellow. I have not a word to say against you, or anyone else, being immersed, if you think you must be; but I cannot allow you to make your conscience the rule of my conduct on such a point as this."

"But you know you have never been properly baptised," said Timothy.

"I know nothing of the kind. All I know is, that I have not been publicly immersed. But then you must know, if, as you say, you have been studying the subject, that the original word for baptise, as used in the Greek, is frequently used when the idea of immersion is altogether absent. For instance, Hippocrates, who lived in the fifth century before Christ, says, when writing of liquid used in dyeing, 'When it drops upon the garments they are baptised.' The garments were not dropped in the dyeing element, but the element fell upon the garments in drops, and thus baptised them. Other writers speak of men being

baptised with tears; of a bladder being baptised with salt-water, but not sinking: when the idea must be, that as it floated buoyantly among the curling and crested waves, the foam of the agitated waters sprinkled it, but could not drown it. Indeed, numberless instances might be adduced to prove, that so far from the word always denoting immersion, it was used by the ancient Greeks in a variety of senses. To baptise was sometimes to wet, to colour, to stain, to inject, to perfume, to dye, to smear, to tint, to cover, to crush, to defile, to ornament, to disguise, to drown, to soak, to pour, to plunge, to imbrue, to wash, to cleanse," &c.

"Yes, but we have not to do with the Greeks, but with the Jews. Were not the people who came to John's baptism immersed?"

"I should say certainly not! But if we are to enter fully into the argument, you must perceive that it rests with you to prove that they were. But I am not disposed to argue with you on the subject. I always avoid it when I possibly can. Not because I am not satisfied in my own mind, but because my experience of such controversies is that they only engender strife. I feel ready for bed, but before I go I will read you a short paragraph from Mills, as to your question concerning John's baptism.

"'The immersion of such immense numbers as John baptised, was absolutely impossible. If he had dipped as many persons in a day as a modern immersionist, with every imaginable convenience, could in a fortnight, and thus in six months have performed the work of seven years, he could not have dipped such

numbers as went to him for baptism; for Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, were baptised of him, in or at the brink of the water of Jordan, confessing their sins. These baptisms are all described as having been administered by him only, and during the six months of his ministry which preceded the baptism of Christ, notwithstanding that much of his time was devoted to preaching, &c. The population of Jordan amounted to at least two millions. Josephus states, that at the passover held thirty-five years afterwards, there were present, in Jerusalem alone, as many as three millions.'"

"But you do not suppose that they were all baptised? Old people and young children would not be brought. Besides, is it not said that they were baptised of him in Jordan, confessing their sins? You do not suppose that babies and infants did this, do you?" said Timothy.

"Certainly not! Nor is it necessary for the validity of my argument, for me to do so. But the numbers must have been large, for scarcely could stronger language be used, had the whole nation been baptised. Had John laboured, standing in deep water for eight hours a day, Sabbaths included, and immersed forty per hour—three hundred and twenty each day—only fifty-eight thousand two hundred and forty could have passed through his hands in the half-year. It was impossible for him to do this; but had it been possible, he could not have immersed one in fifty of three millions. And yet it is said that all Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan,

were baptised of him in Jordan. 'Now that which could not be, was not.' That the people were baptised we most certainly believe, but that they were dipped we do not, and cannot believe."

"Well, I cannot but think," said Timothy, "but that the New Testament invariably means immersion, when it speaks of baptism."

"That," I replied, "I am not at all prepared to grant. But supposing it did, what then? Does it necessarily follow that we cannot fulfil the design of an ordinance without practising the exact mode of administering it? Should we not concern ourselves chiefly with the great end for which the ordinance was instituted? For instance, the work of the Holy Spirit is set forth in baptism, not because that rite denoted complete submersion, but complete purification from moral and religious defilements; just as in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, we do show forth the Lord's death. But how do we do this? Do we break bread and drink wine, as the Saviour and His disciples did? Do we make a supper, and all eat and drink of it? No, the smallest portion of bread, the least sip of wine suffices; and yet while we have met together at the Lord's table, how often have we realised a sweet sense of His presence, and felt His precious blood sprinkle our consciences and cleanse us from all sin! Now, if this is so, and that it is the universal experience of every church in Christendom will testify, why may not a few drops of water be sufficient as a symbol in one case, as a morsel of bread and a sip of wine are in another?"

"Well," said Timothy, "that certainly is a light in which I have not seen the matter before. I must examine that point."

"Do so," we observed, "and in the meantime try to remember that those who differ from you respecting this controverted subject, may be as sincerely desirous to do the will of God and keep the commandments of Christ, as you are yourself. But time is going, and I must be up early in the morning, so good-night and pleasant dreams to you."

Next morning, Timothy had not been down many minutes before he entered afresh upon the subject. "I have been thinking," said he, "a good deal about your remarks respecting the difficulties in the way of our coming to the positive conclusion that John immersed all the persons he baptised in Jordan. Still I cannot give up my idea that he did so."

"And I cannot give up the idea that he did not."

"But what is meant by the passage which states that John baptised at 'Enon, because there was much water there'? Does not that imply that he immersed the people?"

"Certainly not. The crowds who attended John's ministry would require 'much water' for various purposes, especially in such a 'dry and thirsty land' as Palestine. A good supply of water would be indispensable, even if there had not been any baptisms. When the people left their homes in all parts of the country to repair to the attractive scene of John's labours, they could take their food with them, but it would not be possible to carry the requisite supply of

water. Their feet had to be frequently washed, and the beasts of burden, on which the travellers from a distance rode, also required water for drink in common with themselves. In eastern lands, caravans pitch their tents near to springs of water; and a small fountain occasions the encampment of an army, or the erection of a town. Thus Israel encamped at Elim, because there were wells of water there. And for the same reason, the American Methodists hold their large and protracted camp-meetings where a copious supply of water can be had. The simple fact appears to be that John preached and baptised where there was a good supply of water, because of the necessities of the people. Then take the case of the three thousand converted at Pentecost. Can you imagine, much less believe, that there were the requisite conveniences in Jerusalem for the immersion of such a number of people in one afternoon, without preparation and without delay? Why, the nearest river, Jordan, was thirty miles off, taking a direct and straight course. True, there was the brook Kedron; but even in the rainy season it is but a muddy stream, and in summer it is always dry. And Pentecost was in the summer season."

"But, then, I have read of the pools of Bethesda and Siloam. Might there not be water there sufficient for the purpose?"

"Bless me, Tim, how you talk! Why these are both little pools fed by a solitary spring, only large enough in which to dip the finger or moisten the lips. Do you think, now, that three thousand persons could

be dipped in those two pools? Why, the thing is absurd. The people had left their homes, without the least idea of being baptised. They no more thought that they were going to be converted, when gathered together to hear Peter, than you thought that you would be awakened and convinced of the error of your way that Sunday afternoon, when you heard our old friend Beckworth preach on the East-Marsh Green; and I really hope you don't suppose that they were all—persons of both sexes, in various conditions of health, and of diverse customs and habits—'put under water' in the clothes they then wore, and afterwards walked through the streets, attired in drenched garments, exposed to the taunts of one class and the peril of another. Why, the thing would neither be possible nor decent!"

"Stop a bit! Don't you think you are putting it rather too strong?"

"Not I, indeed. Why, remember how in those days, and indeed down to our own times, the jealous Orientals kept their wives and daughters from mixing amongst men, and then ask yourself if it was likely that they would have allowed them to submit to the unseemly act of immersion. They would have deemed it a trespass upon the common instincts of human nature, and an outrage upon good manners, to say nothing of religion. Such a ceremony, or rather series of ceremonies, could not have taken place without many accidental exposures and dangers, nor without exciting ridicule, jealousy and disgust. But there is not a single reference anywhere in the Acts, or the

inspired epistles, to show that any such difficulties were encountered, either on the day of Pentecost, or at any subsequent period of the apostles' labours in any part of the world. The matter is mentioned in the briefest and simplest manner possible; and as an easy and simple rite, it was evidently administered at once, and on the spot, without ostentation, difficulty, explanation, preparation, or delay. All this is incompatible with the idea that thousands were dipped at once, but perfectly in harmony with the ancient and divine rite, in which man received lustral water from the hands of an administrator. But I am getting tired. Do you want any more on the subject?"

"Well, I think you have certainly answered all my objections on that point, and I cannot myself see how they could all have been immersed."

"Well, then, let us leave the matter, at least for the present. But search the Scriptures for yourself, and try to 'understand what the will of the Lord is.' Only I hope you will allow me to do the same, and not unchristianize me if I cannot see that no one can be baptised unless he is immersed."

Timothy, during the rest of his stay, did not revert to the question.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH TIMOTHY IS SHAMEFULLY TREATED AND DREADFULLY OFFENDED.

ANOTHER year revolved, and once more I met with my old friend. I had heard very little from him during that time, but had learnt from others more than I cared to hear about the numerous changes he had passed through in connection with his business affairs. With these, however, I will not trouble the reader. On our meeting, I reminded him of my promise to go and hear his favourite minister, and offered to accompany him the next evening. "You need not trouble yourself," said he, "for I assure you, you will not be paid for your pains." "Indeed!" I exclaimed, "I understood from you that I should have a treat. Did not you say that he was a very superior preacher?" "I used to think so," said he, "but I have altered my opinion. The fact is, the fellow is a mere prig, and preaches other men's sermons. I heard him, some time ago, deliver a beautiful discourse. But a day or

two afterwards, whilst eulogizing it to Mr. Y——, he declared that he had almost every word of it in a book at home."

"And suppose he did say that," I asked, "does it follow that it was so?"

"Why, you don't mean to insinuate that he would be guilty of prevarication, do you?"

"Certainly not! But I conceive it to be quite possible for Mr. Y—— to make a mistake on such a subject. I have heard so many stories about ministers stealing their sermons, which, upon investigation, have turned out to be founded on some fancied resemblance between their discourse and the writer's they had been supposed to have copied, that I have ceased to take notice of such reports. Why, I distinctly remember this very Mr. Y—— informing me, some years ago, that he had once walked twelve or fifteen miles to hear the great F—— preach, and that he, Mr. F——, actually gave them, *verbatim*, a sermon Mr. Y—— had in his possession. 'What was the subject'? I asked, and he replied, 'The raising of the widow's son; and the sermon was taken from Bishop Hall's Contemplations.' 'I know the article,' I said. 'I understand that Mr. F—— is a remarkably rapid speaker; and, if I am not mistaken, you said he preached an hour and twenty minutes.' 'He did,' said Mr. Y——, 'and I never heard a man say so much, so clearly and distinctly too, in the same time.' 'Well, now,' I said, 'if you will bring me the volume, I will guarantee to read slowly and deliberately every sentence the bishop has written upon the subject in ten minutes.' He

brought me the book, and turning to the place, was surprised to find the article was exceedingly short. The fact was, the preacher had used a figure which the bishop uses, and which he had probably borrowed from him; and on so slight a foundation we find Mr. Y—— had raised his imposing superstructure. It is very likely that his statement in the case you refer to rests upon no firmer basis."*

"Well, be that as it may," said Timothy, testily, "I can't bear the fellow. Why, he has treated me abominably. Indeed his conduct has been most scandalous and despicable. I have done with him, and no mistake. It is impossible for me to profit under his ministry after he has acted towards me as he has." Here Timothy went into the details of a long story, from which I found that the cause of his dissatisfaction arose out of some supposed ill-treatment he had received connected with a matter of business, in which the minister had employed "a mean fellow, who was not even a member of the church," in preference to himself.

Putting on as serious a countenance as I could assume for the occasion, I observed that it was "a very painful matter indeed. Still he must remember that such cases were, in this shockingly disorganised and imperfect state of things, sadly too common. The conduct of man to man was sufficient to make one's

* This ultimately was found to be the case. For on being privately spoken to on the matter, Mr. Y—— confessed that he had only been joking, and that the book which "contained nearly every word of the sermon," was Walker's Dictionary!

heart bleed, and cause one to exclaim with Carlyle, 'After all, we men are a very mean set;' but yet it was, perhaps, some mitigation of our grief to be able to believe that much of this misery

> 'Was wrought from want of thought,
> And not from want of heart.'"

"I have met with a very sad case lately," said I, "in which a person was ill-treated in much the same way as you have been."

"Poor fellow! then I can sympathise with him," said Timothy, the tears starting in his eyes. "How did it happen?"

"Well, this was something as I heard it. A minister of a certain Congregational church had been in a very poor state of health for some time, when his wife, who had been unwell for several months, died somewhat suddenly, leaving a large family of young children. This severe loss quite upset him, and rendered rest for awhile absolutely necessary. Some weeks after the funeral, one of his deacons, an aged and venerable man, called upon him, and after a few ordinary remarks, said, 'Well, my dear sir, I looked in to see if you would take a short walk with me. The morning is very fine, and it would do you good.' 'Oh, no, my dear sir,' said the minister, 'I really do not feel equal to it; pray excuse me.' After ineffectually urging him for some time, the good deacon at last said, 'Well, the fact is, my dear sir, I want you to go out for a reason I did not care to mention; but do you know Mr. Jones has left us and gone to the Methodists?' 'Mr. Jones! Mr. Jones!! Why, whatever can have

induced him to take such a step? He has been with us from childhood, and appeared to be one of our staunchest friends. I should almost as soon have thought of you leaving as him.'

"'That is what puzzles me,' said the deacon. 'He is dreadfully offended, and declares that he has been scandalously behaved to.'

"'Indeed! And by whom?'

"'This is the most singular part of the affair to me. The fact is, he attributes it to yourself.'

"'To me?' asked the minister, in perfect amazement. 'Why, my dear sir, I have never had an unkind word with him in my life. There must be some misapprehension on his part.'

"'Just so, and that is the very reason I am wishful for us to call upon him. I have no doubt if we do so we can soon remove it; for allow me to assure you, dear sir, that all acquainted with you know that you are incapable of intentionally injuring Mr. Jones or anyone else.'"

"Thus appealed to, the meek brother put on his top-coat, and sallied out in search of the lost sheep."

"And what came of it?" asked Timothy. "And how did it all arise?" putting his questions in a somewhat singular order.

"Be patient," I remarked, "and I will tell you both how it arose and ended. Its origin was sad enough, as you will presently learn. When the deacon and minister reached Mr. Jones's house, they were shown into the drawing-room, where, after a few minutes that gentleman joined them. After some

commonplace remarks respecting the weather, &c., during which all parties felt exceedingly uncomfortable, the venerable deacon said, 'Well, Mr. Jones, our purpose in calling is to enquire if the report we have heard that you have left our place of worship is true?'

"'It is perfectly true that I have done so,' stiffly observed Mr. Jones.

"'And pray may I ask what reason you have for doing so?' asked the deacon.

"'I had rather not enter into that subject,' said the ill-used individual, 'it's too painful. Ask him,' pointing to the minister; 'he knows all about it."

"'Me! my dear sir; I assure you I have not the most remote idea of what you refer to,' said the minister.

"'Now, my dear sir, don't add insult to injury, pray! You must know that it is your mean and despicable conduct which is the sole cause of it all. But, as I told you before, I don't feel inclined to enter into so painful a subject. Suffice it for me to say that it is impossible for me to profit under your ministry after this. So,'—here he rose as if to leave the room —'the sooner this interview comes to an end the better.'

"'Stay a moment,' said the deacon, for the poor minister sat as if confounded, 'I cannot permit you to leave us in this way. You have circulated it all over the town that your sole reason for leaving us is "the scandalous" treatment you have received from our minister. Now allow me to say that such terms as "mean, scandalous, and despicable," are not commonly used by one gentleman towards another; much less

frequent is it that when an explanation is asked, it is refused. It is due to Mr. P—— that you state what he has done to excite your indignation.'

"'Well, then,' said Mr. Jones, resuming his seat, and turning his back on the minister, 'I'll tell *you* about it, but I won't tell him. You know where I sit —just behind the minister's family pew. Well, when we stood up to sing, I stood just behind Mrs. P——. Consequently I could take her height to an inch or so. Now it was good enough to see that she was going off, months before she died;—at least I could see it, whether other folks could or not—and what did I do, think you?' The deacon intimated he could not tell, while the minister sat in utter amazement. 'What did I do? why I went and looked out as nice a piece of wood as we had on the premises, and had as handsome a coffin made as you ever saw in all the days of your life; and then if he didn't go and buy his coffin at another shop! Now how is it likely that I can get any good under his preaching after such scandalous treatment as that?' Here Mr. Jones disappeared, leaving his visitors to make their exit as they thought proper."

"Now don't you think, my friend, that such behaviour was both 'scandalous' and 'despicable?'" said I, addressing Timothy, who during the latter part of the story had been walking up and down the room in a very excited state.

Suddenly turning round, he said, "Have you read that story anywhere, or have you manufactured it?"

"Manufactured it! Why, you must think I am

like Billy Moore, who made, as his mother said, a fiddle 'all out of his own head, and had wood enough left to make another.'"

"Do you know, my very dear friend, that I begin to think that you are getting into the habit of carrying your jokes too far, and that you are very little removed from a very foolish person," said Timothy.

"I have been thinking I have been *very near* a very foolish person all the night," said I.

"Indeed! then the sooner we separate the better," and turning on his heel he walked off in a pet.

For some time after this Timothy continued in a very unsettled state. Now and then I heard of him coquetting with his first love, and then ultimately setting up for himself. His congregation consisted of a few children and old women, "persons"—as a correspondent of mine remarked—"who had not come to their senses, or had lost them." These soon grew weary, and he was left all alone in his glory. Next I learnt that he had left the town and was wandering about, "having no certain dwelling-place." For a long period I heard nothing from him; at last I received a long and rambling epistle, in which he informed me that while in "seculars" he was not finally fixed, in "spirituals" he was at last settled and determined. "All his vacillation and unrest" he attributed to the fact "that he had been seeking peace where it could not be found, viz.: among the worldly and unscriptural sectarian denominations." "But at length" he had "seen the error of his ways, and had 'found the rest he had longed to find,' among

those who owned no human authority in religion whatever, but acknowledged the Saviour only as their Lord and Master." In short, I found from the epistle, that after wandering through nearly all the denominations he had joined that most sectarian of all the sects, the Plymouth Brethren.

A long correspondence took place between us, in which we discussed the different arguments he advanced in favour of his new views; but we must spare our readers the particulars of our controversy. For two or three years we heard very little respecting him, but what little we did hear showed that he was going from change to change, landing at length among the Unitarians, as people who were, in his opinion, "among the most reasonable and rational he had ever met with."

CHAPTER XIII.

IN WHICH TIMOTHY GETS AMONG THE SECULARISTS.

SOME time after Timothy joined the Unitarians, business engagements led him to remove to the metropolis, where he ultimately took up his abode. While there, he fell in with some "scientific sceptics," whose *arguments* (!) considerably perplexed him. For a time he combated, but after a while appeared to acquiesce in them. His letters to me became more numerous, and in them he spoke of the "Religion of Science" as the ultimate and only possible religion for the race. Christianity, he stated, was by his friends considered as the religion of priests and partisans. "And what," he asked, "are the results of all this? Superstition; bigotry; persecution; suppression of knowledge; and the arrogance of infallibility."

In opposition to such a system, he stated that his friends propounded the following as the Religion of Science:—

"FIRST SCIENTIFIC PROPOSITION.

"Man was evolved from lower forms of being, and has progressed from the lowest estate to his present civilization by inherent growth.

"DEPENDENT PROPOSITIONS.

"1st. Man has never fallen from a state of perfection—never has been, nor can be, estranged or lost from God.

"2nd. The only possible mediatorship that can exist between man and God, is knowledge.

"3rd. Sin, or evil, is imperfection, which can only be eradicated by normal growth. Man is, and must be, his own saviour.

"4th. A creature of organisation, and subject to unchanging laws, man, in the Church sense of those terms, is not a free agent, nor has he a free will. His apparent free agency is based on the combination of forces by which he became an individual.

"5th. Mortal life is not probationary; immortality is not bestowed, but evolved from and a direct continuance of the physical being.

"6th. The only infallible authority is Nature rightly interpreted by Reason.

"RESULTS.

"Nobility of life; highest ideal aspiration for perfection; calm reliance in the presence of universal and omnipotent forces; all-embracing charity and philanthropy; an earnest and successful endeavour to actualise the ideal perfect life rendered possible by his organisation."

"This system," said he, "frees us from the trammels of priestcraft, and raises us in the scale of intellectual and moral beings. Here is liberty, so far as we are concerned; but when a *thinker* walks out on the breezy highlands of untrammelled thought, and would gladden the world with the spectacle of a beautiful life devoted to noble aims and lofty endeavour, how rave the sectarian winds over the theological marshland below! and how ten thousand tongues run swift to defame his fair name! The calm soul will let them prate, as the unnoticeable anger of children. Religion is organically opposed to progress. It is so as a matter of necessity. Its formulas are unchangeable. It has ever opposed learning, stigmatising it as profane. It

has held all physical sciences as impious, and discarded philosophy, poetry, profane history, and the fine arts as unworthy the notice of regenerated men. It does this because its advocates know well that 'ignorance is the primeval slime out of which infallible authority grows deep and powerful. Were we but delivered from its trammels, we should soon get rid of the nightmare which has acted as an incubus upon the world for eighteen centuries.' "

Timothy's letters showed that he had, like many others who depart from the truth, got lost amid the perplexing mazes of discussions on free will and human responsibility, as the following specimens will show:—

"Difference in the primordial or pre-natal conditions has greater influence than those which environ us after birth. These are integral parts of our being. The difference in these conditions makes the individuality of mankind. Were they the same, all men would be identically the same. The permutation of an infinite series of causes never repeats a number in the series. Hence one man is no more to blame for being unlike another than the oak is to blame for being different from the pine, or the leopard for being unlike the antelope on which it preys.

"Character found in oak, pine, leopard, or man, alike is the expression of conditions pre-natal and environing. As the acorn treasures all the forces which have developed it into a germ capable of producing an oak, so the child is a treasure of forces which will develop a man, and such a man as this treasury compels. There is another aspect to this subject. The acorn, germinating in a barren soil, strives according to the impulse of the forces by virtue of which it is an acorn to perfect an oak; but hard as it may strive to gather sustenance from the crevices of the rocks, its knotty roots can support little more than a gnarled and blighted stem bearing dwarfish branches. What should have been a tree, lofty and gigantic, is blighted into a pitiful shrub.

"The same acorn germinating in a fertile soil, watered by the same showers, refreshed by the same dew, and enjoying the same sunshine and shade, with every condition save one the same, strikes deep roots down into the earth, and on them towers a column-like stem supporting a forest of branches. So the child constantly suffering the pangs of want is dwarfed and distorted, not only physically, but to the centre of its spiritual nature. The same child surrounded by ennobling influences might astonish the world with its genius. Circumstances make the Alexanders, the Napoleons, Platos, Ciceros, the warriors and sages of the world, but they can do nothing without a pre-existing individuality organised in harmony with their requirements.

"It was not my choice whether born a serf in Russia, a slave in the swamps of Carolina, or as I am. Had I been born a serf, so far from thinking of fate, I should have a brute instinct for my native cot, and consider my horizon the limits of the world. So of all conditions in which a human being may be placed; they are ever true to the conditions of their position.

"Man is a *centrestance* as well as a circumstance. The forces concentrated in him react on surrounding conditions. The philosopher, for instance, is born with the capabilities of becoming a philosopher: he is as ignorant at first as the slave-child. In actual acquisition both children are alike; but one child has the desire for and capacity to receive knowledge—the other has not. The desire may be strong, yet obstacles oppose with stronger force, and the 'mute, inglorious' Newtons fail to rise above the common level. Knowledge is an efficient circumstance of Fate, and furnishes the strongest incentive for exertion.

"If we acknowledge—and it is unavoidable—the *necessity* for all that has been, is, and will be, we cannot stray far from a knowledge of the true position. If, on the contrary, we consider ourselves free and independent agents, with such an erroneous guide we cannot avoid going astray. Bound hand and foot by the gigantic forces of Nature, turn which way we will there is no outlet. Yet, are we not footballs, impelled hither and thither as this or that force predominates? The ball is a passive instrument, a mass of matter opposing only the resistance of gravity. Man is a football for the play of the elements, but he, by the concentration of circumstances, becomes more than a circumstance, and therefore reacts on the elemental blows.

"Our existence is the resultant of forces and events reaching back to the dawn of time. These events are evolved in us—are united and individualised." *

If the reader can make anything of the above extracts he is able to do what we have in vain endeavoured to accomplish. The fact was, Timothy had been deceived by high-sounding jargon, and fancied, in the pride of his own imagination, that what he could not *himself* refute was irrefutable. His mind was not particularly *weak*, but it was exceedingly narrow, and such minds as his are easily imposed upon by specious argument. We should remember with Dr. Abercombie, in his "Intellectual Powers," that "while an unbounded credulity is the part of a weak mind, which never thinks or reasons at all, an unlimited scepticism is the part of a contracted mind, which reasons upon imperfect data, or makes its own knowledge and extent of observation the standard and test of probability. An ignorant peasant may reject the testimony of a philosopher in regard to the size of the moon, because he thinks he has the evidence of his senses that it is only a foot in diameter; and a person, holding a respectable rank in society, is said to have received with contempt the doctrine of the revolution of the earth on its axis, because he was perfectly satisfied that his house was never known to turn with its front to the north."

We remember meeting in a Lincolnshire village with a farmer of by no means weak capacity, who, in conversation with us on one occasion, said: "I never could be made to receive the absurd notion that the

* See Hudson Tuttle's "Career of Religious Ideas."

earth revolves; for," observed he, "I have a stable in one of my fields which has been built over twenty years, and the bricklayer who built it put on the tiles, but never came to point them to this day; consequently, they have remained unfastened by mortar or anything else from that day to this. Now, if the earth had been going round, they must have fallen off. How could they have kept on? That's what I would like to know. But I have never met with the man who could answer my question!"

Timothy fell into the error of supposing that what he termed *high* thinking is incompatible with true faith in Christ and His Gospel. This idea underlies the mental complacency so generally manifested by those who prefer the Gospel of Science to the Gospel of Christ. But such persons should remember that—

"High thinking is not necessarily low believing. In the very act of displaying the airs of intellectual superiority, the highest authorities have casually avowed that the present defect of science is the lack of a number of much-wanted generalisations. Of course it is implied on their side that these generalisations, when they are got, will be immeasurably above the old theological creeds. Suppose, however, it should turn out that even these, at their last stage, are of the nature of beliefs—that is, intellectual premonitions, not explicit conclusions fully demonstrable? Most scientific men, we should say, would admit, at once, that such ultimate formulæ as those we are speaking of, in so far as they involve the higher mathematics, not to mention the unprovable hypotheses on which they finally rest, must, in reference to the bulk of people, be practically dogmas. They have to be popularly accepted on authority.

"A sort of recognition of what we are aiming at bringing out is, in fact, beginning to frame itself. Careful readers, for instance, if they will only take note, will find a multiplying repetition in one quarter and another of dissatisfied allusions to the Newtonian doctrine of gravitation. Really, it is, at the last stage, a dogma. If anybody

should reply that, at any rate, there is a sufficiently intelligible verification of the general process of the assumed view in the common facts of experience, they should, if they are sceptics in religion, remember that they are beginning to tread upon dangerous ground. Christians affirm, that in their own inner experience, they find a sufficiently intelligible verification of all the great religious beliefs. But we wish to push the point a little further. Not only are the ultimate scientific generalisations dogmatic for the generality of people, they are of that nature for the very propounders themselves. Mr. Darwin's doctrine of 'a principle of variability' multiplying species, and Mr. Herbert Spencer's tenet of 'the influence of environment,' are both undemonstrable. Every one of these generalisations purports to transcend the world of phenomena, and to give us conceptions of a causative region beyond it. In these lower matters, in the absence of a revelation, our knowledge has to remain unfinished, and scientific men afford us an odd spectacle in the seeing them trying to tinker it by dogmatic guesses. Are religious men irrational in accepting this as a standing proof of the necessity of a revelation in the higher matters, and of the likelihood of its having been given, if there is any beneficence presiding at the head of mundane affairs? For although it does not hamper our practical doings in the realm of physics not to have revealed to us the ultimate generalisations of material causation, a shocking crippling of conduct would follow from the religious beliefs not having been given. However, the question we set out with was—Whether there is any warranty for the assumption that low believing means high thinking? It seems to us patent that, apart from the points where a self-challenge of the old kind arises in the mind to frame these intellectual premonitions which go beyond demonstration, the thinking implied in modern science is rudimentary and very confined, regarded merely as mental phenomena. Tested by any of the principles of physiology, there cannot be any doubt that the finest 'cerebralisation' which the human being has exhibited was the holding in coherency of belief the orthodox religious doctrines. If a certain number among us, owing, it would seem, to special occupations working upon a certain type of temper, have ceased to be capable of these higher mental activities, that is no fair ground for taking on themselves airs. Their own terminology, fortunately enough, offers right words for fairly describing what has happened. With them there has occurred a specific degrading of the differentiation of cerebral activity. Some

glimpse of the possibility of putting the things in this way seems to have been got by certain of them. An attempt has been made to dignify this slackening of thinking by a pretence of its being related somehow to a high philosophy of Nescience. What men used to think easily enough we are now told is unknowable. It has been warningly intimated that the great scientific generalisations themselves are to be permanently suspected—to be held only as 'working hypotheses.' Let the generations try it! According to the general averments of these very teachers, man is at the mercy of his own mind, and they will have, therefore, to take its activity just as it comes. It is a psycho-physiological superstition of a bad kind to expect much from formulating a few verbal rules about agnosticism. The mind in its natural operation discloses a need for dogma, and, in the absence of any which is authoritative, it will attempt to make shift by guess. A number of our scientific men are trying to discredit this necessity by systematically stopping short in their thinking; but their foremost leaders are already breaking down in the attempt. Both Mr. Darwin and Mr. Spencer are dogmatising.

"So far from low believing meaning high thinking, all the facts seem to go the other way, giving a reasonable hope that when the scientists regain full control over the cerebral apparatus, and think higher and with a wider range, the human intellect, by virtue of its proper function, with grace afforded, will give them back the mental habitude of faith."

As to the charge so constantly made by Timothy, that religion is at variance with science, we contented ourselves with sending him the following, which appeared in a local paper about the time that he was writing to us:—

"It is too generally assumed that scientific discoveries have of late years been made which contradict the statements of the Scriptures. This is a mistake. Individual men have put forward theories, speculations, and guesses, which, if true, would modify current ideas of revelation; but those theories, speculations, and guesses have been contradicted by men of equal knowledge and ability. It will be time enough for Christians to be alarmed when scientific men have come to some agreement amongst themselves connected with these discoveries.

Nothing, indeed, can be more desirable than that the great minds of the age should be fully occupied in unravelling the wonderful secrets which lie hidden in the bosom of nature. There is considerable point in the following extract:—'A great many men in this day are saying, "Christianity is falling away from this country and from the world—in fact, that science, its chief antagonist, is triumphing over it." It is thus that the Rev. J. De Witt Talmage commences an article in the last number of the *New York Observer*, and he proceeds to reply to the assertion as follows:—'There is not a fact in science that may not be reconciled with Bible statement. So said Hugh Miller; so said Joseph Henry; so said Professor Hitchcock and Professor Mitchell; and so have said scores of the best scientists of the world. Beside that, have you not noticed that infidel scientists, instead of waging so hot a war against Christianity, are now beginning to fight among themselves? If infidel science came up with solid front, perhaps it might do some damage; but, as far as I can read the signs of the times, it is going to be telescope against telescope—Leyden jar against Leyden jar. Do you think there is any danger that ever the Bible account of the origin of life will be overthrown as long as the scientists differ about the origin of life? Some adopting the theory of Biogenesis, and others the theory of Abiogenesis (I use that phrase because it sounds learned!); and while Agassiz comes out and puts both feet on the doctrine of evolution, and rebukes the young scientists of the day by saying, "I have noticed that many of the young naturalists are falling into the mistake of adopting for theories of science that which has never passed under observation." Agassiz discovered what we have discovered, that men talk wisely very often in proportion as they know little, and just as soon as these young scientists know the difference between the feelers of a wasp and the horn of a beetle, they begin to patronise the Almighty, and to talk about culture as though it were spelled c-u-l-c-h-a-r, culchar. It makes me sick to see these literary fops coming down with Darwin under one arm, and a case of transfixed grasshoppers and butterflies under the other arm, talking about Huxley's protoplasm, and "natural selection," and nebular hypothesis—lithping with an exquithit lithp, and calling all common men fools. These scientists are disagreeing. They do not agree in regard to the gradation of the species. They do not agree in regard to embryology. Can you tell me anything they do agree in? Darwin charging against Lamarck. Wallace spearing Cope, and Herschel denouncing Ferguson. How many colours woven into

the light? Seven, says Newton. Three, says David Brewster. How high the aurora borealis? Two miles and a half, says Lias. One hundred and sixty-five miles, says Twining. Herschel devotes one whole chapter to what he calls "Errors of Astronomy." Laplace says the moon was not put in the right place. He says that if it had been put four times further off from our world there would have been more harmony in the universe; while Lionville comes up just in time, and very fortunately, to show that the Lord was wise, and put the moon in the right place. How far is the sun from the earth? Lacaille says 76,000,000 miles. Humboldt says 82,000,000 miles. Henderson says 104,000,000 miles. Only a little difference of 28,000,000 miles. Mathematicians do not agree. Taylor's Logarithms are found to have faults. The French metric system, which employed the most learned mathematicians of the day, is found to have wrong calculations. Geologists differ. Zoologists differ. Anatomists differ. Astronomists differ. Mathematicians differ. Talk about exact sciences! They are inexact. I have looked all over for something worthy of the complimentary adjective, and I tell you the only exact science is Christianity.'"

The writer of the above letter is not alone in his views, for even professors of science are beginning to question the dogmas of some of their own class. The Rev. Wm. Guest, in an able article in the *Christian*, states that—

"Professor St. George Mivart, President of the Biological Section, recently contested Mr. Darwin's statement in the 'Descent of Man' that the difference in mind between man and animals was one of degree only, and not of kind. Professor Mivart maintained that the distinction was one of kind, and implied that while he accepted the doctrine of evolution up to a certain point, his biological studies did not lead him to conclusions adverse to received religious opinions. Professor Huxley warned the anthropologists against the arguments based on time for the appearance of man in the valley of the Somme. He reminded them of changes during the last five hundred years in the north of Europe; that in Iceland great floods of lava had been poured forth, and the level of the coast remarkably changed. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of these remarks. To no part of the world have the advocates of an enormous antiquity of man

pointed with a more unquestioning assurance than to the valley of the Somme in France. If anyone questioned the great antiquity of the gravel beds, in which relics of man were supposed to be found, he was somewhat contemptuously put down as an ignoramus. What shall be said now that it is Professor Huxley who denies the validity of the arguments based on time for the changes that have taken place? Moreover, by a later report we are startled to find Professor Dawkins, with the candour that marks his character, throwing a doubt on the general belief that the flint 'implements' of the valley were the work of man. Nor was it in sectional meetings only these retractations occurred. In the general meeting Professor Ray Lankester gave an address, which contended that in relation to the human race it was not so much development, but degeneration from a former civilisation, which science and history bore witness to, and this is that which Scripture assumes. Elsewhere the same change of opinion is to be noted. A few months ago Mr. T. McK. Hughes, F.R.S., Woodwardian Professor of Geology at Cambridge University, spoke in my hearing, at the Victoria Institute, on the antiquity of man question. After a fine historical survey of evidence he refused to give man a farther place back than the post-glacial gravels. This is a great fact. Let a non-scientific person look at a good geological table, and he will see that the period of the post-glacial gravels is placed almost at the top of the geological epochs or ages. The time when man appears is comparatively insignificant when looked at in sight of the vast periods which preceded, and in which there is no trace of man. And what is this but that which the Scripture teaches? A professor in the very front of geological students thus brought man's origin forward over the incalculable ages which have been assumed for his antiquity. It becomes a Christian duty to make those facts known, and to point them out to those who have been beguiled by asumptions. Between science and revealed religion the grand reconcilement may not have come. We are clearly on the way to it. The approach is not made by partisans of the Bible, but by independent investigators of nature. The aversion to the thought of the superhuman is passing away from scientific minds. The evidence is becoming a doctrine of science, no less than the teaching of Revelation, that the order of creation was not nature first, but mind and reason. That evidence once admitted, the introduction of Christianity will be found to follow in a Divine order. When physical hypothesis is seen to be reaching up to the

great utterance, 'In the beginning was the Word,' the world with its woes and guilt is on its way to that second revelation, 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.' He who was nature's original Light came into the world 'lighting every man.' The fear, then, that learning and science are hostile to the teaching of Scripture need no longer trouble a generation which is groping its way so discontentedly through life, and which, above all things, wants a Saviour of Life, and an unseen but strong and loving Hand on which it can trust and lean."

The rapid and delightful change which has taken place among the leading professors of science, in their attitude towards religion, was beautifully illustrated in a sermon delivered to the members of the British Association, by the Archbishop of York, at the recent meeting of that body at Sheffield. The remarks of his Grace are so appropriate to the subject of this chapter that, at the risk of unduly lengthening it, we give the following quotations:—

"The lucid address with which the session opened, and many other papers of a like quality, might be taken as a sign that its strength had in no way abated; nor had the present meeting been marked by any of those collisions between the advocates of science and the advocates of religion, which seemed to him to be needless, and also deplorable. In truth, there seemed to be room for faith as well as for science, and he thought they might spend a short time that morning in contrasting some of the lines which sundered them, and points on which they touched, with advantage to both. Science dealt with facts, whilst religion represented the enthusiasm and the feelings and the impulses of our race. Faith had for its work to bring the individual soul to know and to reverence God. Hence the individual was its ultimate end and aim. Knowledge only enabled the individual to escape from it into a general issue—the cause of the law. Those were the objects of which she was in search. She could not stop, so to speak, for the individual. She interrogated it, and passed on her road. If they wanted to find the region of love and care for the individual, they must seek it from JESUS of Nazareth, who said, 'Come

unto me all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' That had softened the rigour of human life for 1800 years. Since the word was spoken, the one man and his soul and his wish for reconciliation had become an object of interest to the Church of God. Civilisation pretended that now she was able to dispense with the aid of religion! That the lesson had been learned, forsooth, and that the schoolmaster might be dismissed. He was at that moment concerned with the past, and that the faith of Christ had been in that past an independent factor in the sum of things that we called progress, was a fact which no reasonable man could possibly doubt. Religion had taken charge of the individual interests, so apt to be overlooked in the general march and movement. Though scientists had promoted and dealt with great ideas, wise and sweeping theories, religion had had to do with the individuals; all beloved of Christ, and thereby endowed with sacred rights and protected with the privilege of the Kingdom of Heaven. Those who wished to see the last step of natural selection must give the Church a hearing when they said that they did not know how it would fare with them in the future. Scientific generalisation could not appreciate them, and the greatest wonder about man was, perhaps, that he could stand in the midst of the glories and beauties of the world, with its storms and its strifes and its infinite height and depth of sorrow, and caring nothing about the cause of all this, be content with his portion of food and amusement. They might tell him, for example, that family life had first sprung from some accidental variations. Animals that had hitherto met but for a moment and parted, begun to seek little prolongings of the fortuitous meetings of male and female, and so invented the first stage of family life. What moral hold would such a view as that take on the hearers? The first would receive it with an incredulous stare, the second with an epigram, the third with a smile, the fourth would ask how the evolution of man could turn on accidental variation, the fifth would ask what kind of accident, if science refused to know accidents, and the last would say that after all there was more virtue in the Tenth Commandment to protect the life of the family than in zoological speculations of any kind. Some thought that all tokens of discouragement in the race of man at this time, with Nihilism here, Socialism there, Pessimism in one country, Communism in another, spring from one root. Theories of the past of our race offered no promise for its future. They did not ask that any truth should be

kept back. They did not desire that any research should be arrested. On the contrary, truths would all harmonise, for all truths came from one spirit. They sought to escape from half truths. They contended that science did not know and humanity could not afford to suppress that faith which had played so great a part in the past. They saw no reason for attributing to accidental variation great changes which had affected the world. The theories most in vogue at present accounted for the strife of the world, but not for its order, its peace, and its love. The yearning of the individual soul to get nearer to God found that satisfaction in religion which from science it could not enjoy. Mere knowledge would not help a man. Faith would help him. Faith was one mode of comprehension, knowledge was another, and by faith he meant Christian belief, which was a loving resolve to have Christ as a guide and master in life and his hope in death. True faith, which had been called the genius of the soul, was not divided. It had given itself wholly to one thing. It knew that to love Christ and to deny itself, and to come to Him, was the way to live and to die, and it was trying to do it. When the divine germ of Christianity was planted in the fermenting slime of the world there was every chance that it would perish. But Peter and Paul were not students of the doctrine of chance. They were bound to serve the Master to whom they had given themselves. Science aimed at generalities. Faith sought the perfection of the individual. Science sought to know, faith strove to do. Science was intellectual, faith was ethical. Science throws light on the world's history, and upon the arts of life and the wonders of creation. Science was now almost alone found in the possession of the few, for nothing was more remarkable than the feeble interest of the masses in the world which is their home. Religion is universal. If there were exceptions, as some contended, amongst the nations of the world, they were such as by their degradation furnished the best comment on the rule. The less the man the less the religion, and in every nation he that feared God could come to Him and could serve Him. Science made no pretence to supply those motives which religion had furnished through all ages for devotion to life and high endeavours. What they had a right to complain of was that some persons said that religion might now be dispensed with, pointing to the very safeguards which religion herself had wrought for society as a proof that order was so firmly rooted that science now needed no help. He read the signs of the times quite

differently. In one country, girls of fifteen and youths with the down upon their chins were dragged into exile or death for trying to overturn society by flame and blaze. In another, a fair city was given over to the lowest of the people to waste with fire. In another, odious pessemism was creeping like mildew over the minds and wills of the people, and this was in a country where materialism had most strongly established itself. That was what they would find. Were they not afraid to remind man of his low origin and of his strife for existence at the same time that they told him that no master eye was upon him, that no care was felt anywhere for what he should do or be? Would not the answer be, 'If I am a child of strife, let me strive. If I am descended from the brutes, brute passions are my right inheritance.' When troubles came upon him, and they had taken from him those high motives for patience and submission which at present were powerful—thanks be to God for that to soothe thousands of beds of pain, and to speak hope in thousands of darkened and striving homes—and when the struggle for existence had been made and had failed, they must expect despair, for there was nothing else. They were bound before they deprived man of the motives which came from above to see what they could give him in their stead. There was nothing they discovered of hereditary social instincts which had come to us from the ant, the swallow, and beaver, but if man was a bundle of inherited instincts he was not at all responsible for the richness or the poverty of his own inheritance. He was not free. He was what his instincts made him. If progress met some of our wants it increased our wants in a greater degree. The more joys we indulged in the more clear it became to us in the depth of our spirit that such joys would never fill and satisfy the soul. Religion could supply hopes and motives, as thousands of lives devoted to God bore witness in the present and in the past. It could mould the life anew and make it strong and consistent; it had turned submission into contentment; it had infinite resignation; it was a return of the soul to God with a recognition that God is the author of it, and its hope and its home; it was a purifying of the soul that it might be like its Lord, for He is pure. Shall religion, then, survive the checks that it daily sustained? The suffering heart makes answer, 'Lord, to whom should we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.' To the men of science belonged the secret harmonies of the world, its immense history, its wealth of wonder and beauty. To us men of sorrows and aspirations there was

room for both. Both represented a real need. Neither would perish. There was room for both. To men of science belonged the wonders of the heavens, the moon, and the stars. To us it belonged to convince each man that he was not lost and forgotten in a universe that widened as we explored. God was mindful of them all, sorrowing children of men. He counted their sorrows, compassioned their sins, awoke their love for Him, bade them work for Him, called them home to Him."

CHAPTER XIV.

IN WHICH TIMOTHY HEARS SOMETHING TO HIS ADVANTAGE.

TIMOTHY'S companions, the Secularists, were in the habit of meeting in a Hall in Philpot Street, where utterance was given to such blasphemous sentiments that he soon wearied of listening to them, and but seldom attended the meetings. The boldness and dogmatism, however, with which they asserted their objections to Christianity, did not fail to impress him with the idea that "after all there must be something in them." Waxing bolder and bolder from the fact that no one took the trouble to contradict them, they issued a bill inviting discussion. "The parsons," said they, "do nothing but assert their dogmas, and proceed in their discourses as if their opinions were indisputable and infallible; but let them remember that unsupported assertions can be of no avail to alter the views of those who are opposed to their peculiar doctrines. Nor can the opinions of sceptics be altered by threatenings. If they desire to bring about such a result, let them appeal to our reason, and produce

their strong arguments. They should endeavour to establish the truth of their creed by exhibiting the force of its evidence, and the futility of the objections that are brought against it. If they will find a man *competent* to perform such a task and bold enough to undertake it, we promise to give him an early opportunity of doing so, and will go to hear him and listen to what he may have to say in favour of Christianity as a system calculated to elevate the masses of society."

Such a challenge was at once accepted by a minister of considerable position and ability,* who met the Secularists on their own ground, and delivered a lecture in their hall, entitled "Christianity worthy of God and suitable to Man." Timothy attended, and was deeply impressed by what he heard. He made copious notes of the lecture, and, as it was shortly afterwards published, sent us a copy, from which, and his notes we have made copious extracts :—

"He (the lecturer) did not attempt to deny or to conceal the wondrous and astonishing benefits which Science and Secularity have won for themselves, and spread over the wide and fair field of man's welfare, in abridging his toil, adding to his knowledge, or augmenting his comforts—nor did he attempt to pluck from man's brow a single laurel which, by truthful and painstaking investigation, he has nobly and successfully earned, whether gathered in the arduous and difficult path of scientific experiment, promoting educational institutions, or uplifting and securing society's morality, and man's happiness. These, by whomsoever attempted, or by whomsoever achieved, he regarded as auxiliaries to religion, and entitled to esteem as man's friend and society's benefactors.

"He also cheerfully recognised the fact that society is only an

* The Rev. A. P. Black, M.A., F.R.S.

aggregation of individuals, and that the welfare of each is intimately connected and dependent upon the welfare of all, and that it is therefore every man's duty, if not his interest, not only 'to provide things honest in the sight of all men,' but to help and augment, to the extent of his means, his talents and his position, and the force of his example, the sum-total of the social and individual happiness of the whole human family. So that, in this view, both Secularist and Religionist regard society as their common parent or brotherhood, in which not only self-interest, but reason and revelation, demand and expect, as in the home circle, natural sympathy and fellow feeling; and also social progress, whether by promoting a wider and purer system of education, a larger amount of knowledge and training in the arts and sciences, political information, and moral up-bringing. That this education is by both to a certain extent recognised as not only the defence, but the guarantee of much of a nation's happiness.

"Nor would we," he proceeded to say, "subtract an iota from the well-won honour to which Secularists are entitled, in what we believe to be their honest endeavours in arousing man 'to know himself,' or to spread over humanity a greater amount of information, by which the happiness of man might be indefinitely increased.

"With the Secularist, up to this point, we seem almost to be one in opinion; we equally desiderate, and lament over man's social, intellectual, and moral obliquities. Man, the possessor of powers, and the depositary of capabilities which, lying latent or perverted, might, if called into right exercise, and directed into their proper channels, not only have raised man to a new and higher existence and position, but have cast over society a halo of happiness and peace and love such as the poet's imagination never dreamed of and the philosopher never conceived.

"He believed, too, that a knowledge of science, a love of pure art, in its wonderful creations, with their attendant and necessary adjuncts of mental discipline and self-respect, would give a healthier tone and temper to society. But," he continues, "we understand it as assumed by the Secularist that it is not only man's *chiefest*, but his *only aim and duty*, to concern himself for and about his own and society's *temporal well-being;* or, in other words, their creed may be thus summed up, 'What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?' To which may be added, scientific research, intellectual improvement, and social progress, without any

reference, however, to religion, revelation, the soul, God, and eternity; because, say they, religion, revelation, God, the soul, and a future state, are but vague and uncertain, and that a belief in any or all of these is not necessary, or, if necessary, but of secondary importance, to man's present bodily and mental wants, and the world's requirements.

"That it is man's bounden duty, by the law of Nature and by the Word of God, 'to provide for his own,' to assist and to love his brother, to be industrious, frugal, and saving for old age, to be prepared from his own resources to meet reverses and misfortunes, and the thousand ills to which 'flesh is heir,' every religionist, at least every Christian, will be as unflinching to advocate and defend as the most devoted Secularist.

"But that food, shelter, and raiment, science and social well-being—in a word, time and time's things—are the chief aim of man's pursuits (that is, if he be in possession of a soul, a partaker of immortality, and if there be a God), then we at once deny the conclusion that *Secularity ought to be man's chief and only engrossment;* or until it can be satisfactorily proved that 'the meat is more than the body, and the raiment more than the soul,' or could it be satisfactorily shown (and it is questionable whether a man could believe it) that he has no soul, but perishes like the brutes around him, that there is no God, and that there is no hereafter—in a word, that man has no fears of punishment, no hopes of bliss, and no longings for immortality, and that the whole system of revelation was and is a 'cunningly devised fable' to keep the vulgar and the masses in awe, or in ignorance of their strength, and under government or restrainment—could this be proved, or could we believe it, then no Secularist would outrun us in extending and promoting man (the mortal) in his acquisition of purely secular education and progress.

"But to stop at this point in man's progress would be, in our estimation, to retrograde, and fall back upon the dim and obscure light which unaided reason supplies, under which the nations of antiquity groped and groaned and erred—'While professing themselves wise they became fools' (*Romans* i. 21). But 'we, having a more sure word of prophecy to which we do well to take heed,' believe that *man is composed of both mind and matter, or soul and body:* the one finite and frail, a superstructure of earth, raised and supported from its elements, crumbling daily to its original dust 'from which it

was taken, and to which it shall return,' while the other is immortal and indestructible, because spiritual, and therefore independent of the accidents of matter, and may exist, though separated from, the adjuncts of body, time, and locality.

"And we further believe and maintain that while the body, like the brute, dies and goes downward, the spirit returns to God who gave it, being immortal and responsible, and *therefore is the better part.* Hence we conceive *our first and chiefest effort ought to be given and directed to man's education and religion*, in training the spirit for its duties and accountabilities, in *rectitude* and *personal holiness*, thus fitting the inner man for a virtuous and God-serving career in time, and for the glorious and unfading destinies of a purchased heaven, and reserved felicity for 'those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.' Thus acting up to, and under the conviction that God in judgment 'will render to every man according to his deeds'—'to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life' (*Rom.* ii. 6-8). This alone is worthy of an immortal being; worthy of man, with powers and capabilities which man cannot measure, nor perhaps angel comprehend. This would be a complete education, which would embrace soul training, fixing principles, eradicating vicious habits, engrafting holier and more lovely, meliorating man's hard lot, and promoting the glory of God. We would, with the Secularist, do everything for the body, all we could for society, and make every sacrifice to lift up and gladden humanity in its toil, labour, and sorrow; but we would not stop here. No, we would try to make man happy by making him virtuous and good, and therefore *religious:* for this, we believe, can alone reach and influence the heart and the affections. We would bring man, mind, body, and soul, under the deep and powerful restrainment of heavenly religion, under the conviction of a God all-seeing, a God all-just, and a God all-potent. We would tell him of a Saviour's sympathy and of a Saviour's love; the winnings and attractions of the Cross, or the fears and terrors of Heaven's wrath. We would teach and fill his mind, and try to influence his heart and life, not only with Biblical information, of precept and command, but with doctrine and example, together with the received testimony of the ancients who wrote upon this subject, that man (*vide* Cicero, corroborated by Plutarch) without religion, with its hopes and its fears, its rewards and its punishments, is only a *superior animal*,

whom no law can coerce, and whom no power can restrain except the fear of the gods, or the brute force of governmental authority in the form of physical appliances.

"'But,' it is answered by the Secularist, 'we are perfectly satisfied, and believe that a sound secular education of the usual branches taught in our schools, together with a better acquaintance with the elements of science, the simple laws of nature, with enough of art to give relish for our galleries and museums—these, with a thorough understanding between "*meum* and *teum*," are amply and alone sufficient for man and for society.'

"We must confess that this system seems to us cold, comfortless, and sterile, clear, it may be deemed, but it is the moon's pale beam reflected from a snow wreath, or from an Alpine glacier, throwing its cold and cheerless influence over the face of Nature, destroying health, hope, and life, beauty and usefulness.

"Thus Secularity, view it as you may, is a godless, soul-less, hopeless, and helpless system. What can it afford toward the sustenance and support of man as an immortal? What to satisfy the innate longings, hopings, and aspirations of man's craving nature for a hereafter? What is there in this system for man to lay hold of, and to trust in (for man is by nature and constitution a believer in the supernatural; if he believe not in the true God, he either fears or hopes, invokes or deprecates *something superior to himself*, which he creates or invents, and makes his god)? Where is the authority which we believe to be necessary in every system of training the mind, and moulding man for his duties to himself or to society? Any opinion, or class of opinions, can neither have weight or influence, except they come to us either recommended and sanctioned, or enforced by some competent authority.

"Where, again, is the support and the guide to which the feeble and the doubting may lead, and be led? Nor do we recognise in this system a single refuge or relief for the world-oppressed, for 'the widow and the orphan,' or the weak; no after reward for him whose lot was toil and moil, and the hard crust and couch for long and lingering years; no day of reckoning, keeping alive faith in the justness of a man's cause, while contending with the unjust and the powerful; not a syllable of how a guilty or a seared conscience may either be eased or softened; not a word of pardon to the sinner through repentance, or 'justification through faith'; not a ray of

hope to cheer the dying, with a view of the 'rest which remains to the people of God.' The poor and the aged, the conscience-stricken and the desponding, are left helpless and unpitied to the law and the cogency of man's disapprobation. It requires no second sight to discover that there are thousands of evils perpetrated, and wrongs endured every day by weak and *defenceless women*, by hard-wrought and under-paid servants, *orphans*, and *timid manhood*, which no law can reach, and no opprobrium annoy. Take from all such religion, revelation, God, Christ, and eternity, and you take away, indeed, their *stay*, and their only *hope* and *comfort;* and, we might add, that, in this system of ignoring the need, or the secondary importance of religion, we see nothing of the law of gratitude, nothing of the civil relations of life, nor yet the recognition of that God 'in whom we live and move and have our being.'

"The lecturer then went on to show that unaided reason, or natural religion, has never been able to meet man's requirements as an intellectual and moral being, and that has ever failed to lift man from his present position to a higher and happier; in that it is incapable of improving his morality, mitigating his sorrows, strengthening his hopes, or drying his tears; nor have its warmest admirers ever pretended that it is able to rectify the heart, or change the affections, or call forth the gentler feelings of sympathy and charity for the aged or the afflicted."

The lecturer's hearers were then taken over the scenes of ancient and classic history, and shown that amid all the glory and pomp and power of Greece and Rome natural religion left the people in darkness, and gave them up to unbounded licentiousness and vice. They were also shown that the same is true of the heathen world, who, without the light of the glorious Gospel, practised infanticide, self-immolation, and the most disgusting rites and horrid cruelties. Also that there was nothing unreasonable in the idea of a revelation, but that it is highly probable that the Creator of all men, the "Father of mercies," should reveal to His

fallen creatures a communication which should furnish us with rules of morality and motives sufficiently strong to induce us to practise them, and that to deny the necessity and possibility of such a revelation involves the denier in some of the greatest difficulties it is possible to conceive, being tantamount to ignoring all history and human testimony, forgetting man's hopes and universal anticipations, and supposing that the Almighty Creator has abdicated His throne and left man to perish in his ignorance and his sins.

The lecturer next addressed himself to inquire what a revelation from God ought to be, and showed "that claiming God for its author and man's salvation for its aim, if worthy of its high origin and suitable for its end, it would be expected, as a *sine qua non*, to exhibit the character and attributes of the *most supreme God* in the most impressive, august, and awful manner—to wit, as *omnipotent*, *omniscient*, and *eternal*: untainted in holiness, infinite in wisdom, great, and glorious in mercy and love."

Besides this, it was declared that—

"Such a revelation would be expected to unfold motives and inducements to virtue, in its highest and holiest sense, to render man, like his Author, holy, and to make him happy; it should present sin in its true colours, not only suggest, but lead to motives for its total abandonment; the path to and promises of heaven should be most prominent for encouragement, and the threatenings of God as patent and alarming; there should be every winning way to draw man to holiness, probity, and benevolence; and, on the other hand, every mode of deterring and restraining man from iniquity and injury, with a full and clear exhibition of punishment for the vicious, and rewards for the virtuous."

All this, it was shown, Christianity did.

"A revelation claiming God for its Author and man's welfare for its object, should teach man his true character—that he is frail and corrupt, that his brief and fitful span of 'three-score years and ten' shall soon pass, and that after death he enters upon eternity; that the issues of the future are of too momentous a character for any reasonable and accountable creature to remain in either doubt or uncertainty. We do trust," said he, "that ye who are now before us, and profess to be 'truth seekers,' and men anxious for society's well-being, that you will not permit such a question as whether we are to perish as the brutes or live for ever, whether there be a heaven or a hell, to be a matter of uncertainty and doubt, but a fixed principle from conviction, the truth of which you feel gladdening your heart, soothing, sanctifying, and animating your onward journey in the toils and sorrows of life! That Christianity contains and enforces all these motives and inducements, is known to every reader of its pages.

"A revelation claiming God for its Author and man's amelioration for its object, ought to be of *universal adaptation*, for men of all rank, ages, and countries, embracing and unfolding principles of social union and progress, explaining and enforcing the fulfilment of relative duties to superiors, equals, and inferiors, should command all that is 'lovely and of good report,' and condemn the contrary. Is not this (it was asked) the subject matter of Christianity?

"A revelation claiming God for its Author and man's sanctification for its object, ought to contain precepts, commands, examples, helps, and promises, which, in some measure, would correspond with the great object of its mission. This requirement in revelation is peculiar in the Christian dispensation, in fitting and preparing man and society for the highest and noblest exercise of their powers and position in time, and also for the felicities and bliss of the future.

"Is such a system, with helps to fulfil, with hopes to animate, and rewards of the most exalted description, not worthy of God, and suitable to man? In the Gospel revelation all these meet in the character and examples which it pourtrays and demands, such as 'humility' and 'self-denial,' 'repentance,' 'faith,' 'love to enemies,' and universal benevolence. Try any of the ethical writers of ancient nations for such a code of morals, and such a mode of preparation and meetness for heaven and goodwill to man, as Christianity exhibits.

"But let us enter a little more particularly, and see what a revelation of God ought to embrace. A revelation, then, claiming God for

its Author, and man's comforter and help when afflicted or dying, ought to abound with promises and consolations; it should have a 'balm for every wound,' and wipe the tear from every eye; have a kind and encouraging *word* of comfort and hope for the poor and world-despised; should tell them of a heaven and a home where the distinctions of wealth and rank are unknown. Also to the unfortunate it ought to be able to administer consolation, and trust in that God who is 'making all things, whether prosperous or adverse, to work together for the good of those that love Him;' to the poor and sorrow-stricken widow and orphan, who, by bereavement, have been cast upon the cold mercies of this unfeeling world, it should have something to help and hope, special, tender, and cheering; to the aged and careworn, the feeble, and the despairing, it should speak of promises and a rich reward, and teach them to bear their lot with patience. It should more especially abound in comforts and consolations, of peace and pardon from God the Father through Christ, to the *dying*, when friends and physicians can do no more, when the present world, with all its unsubstantialities, is fast receding from the view, and should point to the better world of spirits, rising and looming in the distance.

"Ah! if any book on earth be 'the afflicted man's companion,' it is the Bible; this is emphatically the poor man's charter, and from whence the oppressed look for an avenger: a Book which tyrants dread, superstition fears, and only the wicked hate.

"Can it be for a moment supposed by any of the care and toil-worn, whose 'darg' is 'from early morn till dewy eve,' whose lot is often uncheered and unmitigated drudgery, that to them a knowledge of Euclid's *Elements of Geometry*, Lardner's *Mechanics*, Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, or Combe's *Constitution of Man*, will either administer hope, give contentment, or endue with patience, to be compared with that which the Christian draws from the Word of God? Will the sons and daughters of sorrow, lying on their beds of affliction, from which none are exempt, in their sick-room or in the view of death, have the same amount of resignation to their lot, the same amount of hope and that 'peace which the world cannot give nor yet take away,' from being proficients and adepts in secular information, as from being believers in and reliers upon Bible truth, Bible promises, and Bible hopes? Or will the poor widow and her fatherless children, the tyrant-oppressed, the conscience-stricken sinner, or any of the degraded and forlorn children of humanity, either be raised, or

changed, or cheered, because well acquainted with and believers in the science of *Political Economy*, *Sanitary Laws*, or any other subject short of that which reached their peculiar mental and bodily exigencies? Will Secular knowledge, of any colour or description, prepare a man for *death*, *judgment*, and *eternity*,—to meet that God who hates sin, and by the law of Nature, by the teachings of Nature, and by Revelation, must punish the guilty. Secularism was never intended for this; it is neither her province, nor is it in her power. But this is emphatically Christianity's aim, and man's chief end. Secularity is for man in health and basking in prosperity, for society's temporal welfare and progress, but totally unfitted for his moral and spiritual well-being and existence. This, however, is not its fault, nor do we bring this as a charge against it, but place it in juxta-position with Christianity to show that the latter is man's chiefest concern, while the former is only *secondary*, however important in a temporal view it may be.

"It might easily be asked, and found very difficult to answer, what has mere Secularity, apart from the teachings and influences of Christianity, ever done for the amelioration of poor down-trodden and appetite-driven humanity? We do not deny its uses and its benefits in its own legitimate province; but does history point to an individual who, under its influence and by its transforming power, from a tyrant became a righteous and humane governor? Or how many instances are upon record of subjects, from pure Secular influences, becoming more loyal or devoted to their prince? Let every married man have put into his hands a copy of Combe's *Constitution*, or *Hobbes* and *Bolingbroke*, let him have them cut and dry on his tongue and in his memory; will he be a better and more affectionate husband to the wife of his bosom than the man who is ignorant of the very name of Secularism, who never read a page of the cheap and current literature of the day, but who is a reader and believer in the Bible, and is under the influence of the Divine command—'Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them'?

"Is it contended that those youths whom we hope are adorning society by their virtues and society, and the graces which are so enchanting to mankind and comforting to parents,—is it contended, we say, that the young men and women, members and believers in Secularism (a term the meaning and latitude of which may extend much farther than we have enunciated), are more *obedient*, *chaste*, and

truthful, and giving greater promise and hope to society, than their equals in age and position, viz., our Sabbath-school teachers, Bible-class leaders, the young men of our Christian Associations? We are aware that this *argumentum ad hominem* may be characterised as too personal, but after all it is the best test by which any system, secular or sacred, can be tried. 'A tree is known by its fruits: men do not gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles.'

"If men be no better subjects, husbands and wives no more affectionate and happy, children not more filial and obedient, young men not more temperate, and young women not more frugal and pure, then we would ask, setting aside scientific and experimental information, *Cui bono?* What is the advantage, or, rather, what a loss to man, the individual, and society at large, by the substitution of Secularism for Christianity! *We know what Christianity is, whence she came, what she can do, what she is doing and* (*what she and we have no doubts of her realising*), *has promised to do.* We may say of her, as has been said of Britannia's flag, for more than a thousand years she has stood, and stands unscathed 'the battle and the breeze.'

"The only wonder is that she is still in existence. We are speaking *more humano;* but she can never perish until God her Author either forgets His promises, ceases to be the Almighty, or to be. That she, after all the virulent attacks of the learned, the powerful, and the malignant, which, during every age since A.D. 30, she has borne and suffered; for kings and princes have often combined against her (see *Psalm* ii.), legislators, philosophers, armies, sceptics, and, greater than all, the hatred and natural depravity of the human heart. All have tried their prowess to injure and overthrow her, but still she stands, like the 'burning bush,' the emblem of my country and of my father's church, unconsumed. Little she wrecks or fears the open and honest hate or attack of an enemy; she has suffered more from her pretended and hypocritical friends and professors, whose crimes and obliquities have been rolled to her door and charged to her character, and even—would it be believed? 'Tell it not in Gath,'—her paid servants, her sons who eat her bread, whom she clothes and keeps, have, by their ungodly greed, their craving for worldly distinctions and honours, carelessness of the flock if they get the fleece, together with party strife and denominational hate, done more to injure true religion than all the persecutions to which she has ever been exposed. We would require no other proof of her Divine origin and Divine keeping

than that she is still the glory of our land, the messenger of peace, suited to herald and secure as of old, when the choir of angels proclaimed in Bethlehem's plains—'On earth peace and goodwill to man.'"

After presenting other arguments, which we must omit, the speaker proceeded—

"This communication, to be worthy of God, should be far above and beyond the petty and paltry jealousies and distinctions which agitate and disturb society; it should be like His own *sunshine*, His *fruitful showers*, his circumambient atmosphere—fitted for all, intended for all, doing good and blessing all, who come acknowledging and seeking its protection. Because, if only local, and adapted for this or that clime, country, or church, it would manifestly be unworthy of the Universal Father, 'who is no respecter of persons.' That the glorious Gospel is fitted for all, we believe will not be denied, and promised to all nations, kindred, and tongues, is patent from its Author's first great commission, 'Go, preach the gospel to every creature,' and that this is being amply and daily fulfilled is to us another evidence of its being 'the power of God and the wisdom of God.'

"That this revelation, to be worthy of God, should by every inducement urge and draw men to the practice of universal benevolence, without respect of colour, clime, or character; and, further, for this purpose, should proclaim and affirm the great fact, that God is not only the Great Parent, but that all men who dwell upon the face of the earth have been made of one blood, consequently one great brotherhood, and are all equal before Him. That with Him there is no distinction of rank, wealth, and birth; that all such adventitious circumstances are absolutely unknown, excepting this, that such adjuncts lay their possessors under additional obligations and responsibilities, 'that to whomsoever much is given much will be required'; that the virtuous and struggling poor, the man with hard, honest, and toil-stained hand, of homely speech and garb, is equal in his Father's sight with the man clothed in fine linen and faring sumptuously every day.

"This revelation, to be worthy of God, should pronounce its thunders and its reserved penalties for the oppressor, who would retain the wages of the hireling, grind down God's poor and weak ones, who would either make or put in force unjust laws upon nations or in-

dividuals. It should also proclaim with a voice to make tyrants tremble, that the cry of the oppressed came up before Him, and that He was in a peculiar manner the avenger of the injured, and the father of the 'fatherless, and the husband to the widow'; that however injustice and power might escape detection and retribution here, they could not escape His righteous judgments hereafter.

"Again, this communication, to be worthy of a holy, just, and truthful God, 'who loveth righteousness and hateth all iniquity,' should contain the most explicit and illustrious examples of the Deity's moral perfections, as forming and establishing His pure and religious character, together with any special or striking facts well authenticated and illustrative of His unbending justice, so far as the subject matter would permit. Nor should there be wanting severe and strict commands and exhortations to holiness of life, purity of heart, and singleness of motive, and, at the same time, threatenings and denunciations of God's anger and judgment upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness, whether in the thought, speech, or conduct of His creatures. And, if possible, that this communication should be the better suited for imperfect and erring man, and also that he might be without excuse, the law of God, distinguishing between right and wrong, justice and injustice, should not only be widely promulgated, but written by the finger of Deity Himself upon man's heart, or natural conscience. This would be worthy of the All-wise, the All-just, and the All-good, and most suitable for man.

"Nor should the said communication be deficient of an *example* to which man might look, and copy for his pattern; and, moreover, that this model Man should be of that rank and position in society that no adventitious circumstance, except His own excellence and virtue, could give either weight or influence to His character; that this Divine model should live, endure and die in such a way and circumstances as would give mankind an imitable example of piety to God and benevolence to man; that His meekness and morality should be unexceptional and patent; His patience under trials, sorrows, and afflictions, such as humanity might follow and imitate. Further, that He should exhibit great and magnanimous forbearance and *forgiveness;* and, finally, that He should die and seal the truth with His blood, as a testimony of His mission and character, and thus afford man a pattern how he should act, when placed in similar difficult and trying circumstances. That were it necessary rather to meet death

than sacrifice the eternal principles of piety and truth, the history of the life and actions and death of Jesus, as exhibited in the Gospels, meets all that we have supposed, will be at once acknowledged by all who now hear me, and know the facts.

"We should still further conceive, that a communication from Heaven would be unworthy of God, and unsuited for man, a sinner, which did not contain a clear and unequivocal exposition of God's willingness and ability to restore man to His favour, which by sin he had lost; therefore, it should unfold a clear and explicit development and exhibition of the mode in which salvation could be effected: such as the TERMS upon which God would receive him, with the varied helps and motives to encourage him to repent and be converted, and thus become meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. And that this plan of salvation should be, in all its bearings and details, such as might be expected from the Majesty of heaven, harmonising with the attributes of His assumed or known character, and should meet the peculiarities of man's case, in all the variety of their circumstances; every obstacle to man's restoration should be removed, God's offended law honoured, His outraged justice satisfied, His holiness and truth should 'meet and mutually embrace.' While an agency should be made known and applied to correct the corrupt propensities of the sinner's heart, by which his whole conduct and character would become reformed, all old things pass away, and all things become new, living soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

"Now we are willing that Christianity be tried by these severe tests, and we have no fears of the issue; we presume that almost all now before us are aware that we have drawn these particulars and desiderata from the rich and varied treasury of the 'Sacred Word.'

"Revelation, then, *is* worthy of God, and a *boon* to man, because it discovers those things which unenlightened reason could never have conceived, or, if conceived, unassisted reason and nature could never have accomplished. Let us not be misunderstood, as if we undervalued natural reason, which is 'the cradle of the Lord,' and is Divine; but reason, though extensive and important, is necessarily limited to its own sphere, in which and over those subjects and principles which come legitimately within its ken and influence, it is certain and sure, and from whose decision there is no appeal. It is the business of reason to determine of the being, perfection, and providence of God (*Rom.* i. 19, 20). This is the first great principle upon which all

religion is founded. We must either reason and prove there is a God, or, as we have done in this lecture, take it for granted, ere we attempt to prove the necessity of a revelation from God to man.

"It is not only the province but the prerogative of reason to judge of the truth or falsity of revelation, to scrutinise its evidences, by testing its credibility, and pronouncing upon its harmony with the Divine character, and also its suitableness or unsuitableness to man. For to us it would appear as something like reasoning in a circle to attempt to prove the necessity of revelation from the Bible, and the Bible from an extraordinary revelation.

"Reason, then, in our estimation, is of so sacred a character, that revelation, with all its evidences of credibility upon its brow, and the glad tidings of good-will to man in its hands, we could not receive as a communication from God to man, if it had anything in it repugnant to, or at variance with, the principles of reason. Much there may be, and must be, in a revelation coming from the Infinite in heaven, which man's finite mind can neither grasp nor comprehend. This is no more than was to be expected, but things *above* or *beyond* reason is a very different matter from things contrary and repugnant to it. It may be above our apprehension, or beyond our expectation, that revelation should contain the doctrine of imputed sin or imputed righteousness (see *Romans* v. 15, *ad finem*), and the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead; and we may place in the same category the eternity of rewards and punishments. Concerning the resurrection, reason is absolutely silent, giving us neither hint nor suggestion of its probability or possibility; but, although she says nothing in its behalf, yet she has nothing to urge against it. She can only conjecture and speculate, having no fixed *data* or principles: she can only hazard her conclusions. But revelation 'has brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel,' and has therefore set this question for ever at rest. Reason and revelation, let it be remembered, always run parallel, and, as far as they go, harmonise and reflect each other; both being gifts and communications from the same Father to man, it is impossible they can ever jar, if rightly understood, where God demands our reasonable service.

"We had intended to contrast Christianity, in its pure and elevating morality, its humanity, its liberty, its countenance to learning, science, and art, and all the other pursuits by which man is dignified and made virtuous, with Heathenism, Mahomedanism,

Brahminism, as represented in the different countries which are yet unevangelised. We also had intended to contrast Christianity with Judaism, which, however much ridiculed, as far excelled the religion of contemporaneous nations as day does night, or truth error, and to have shown you how much more this latter dispensation is suited for man, and displays the glory of God, than any former or all others.

"We need do no more upon this point than simply call your attention and ask you to compare Christianity, as seen and enjoyed in Britain, with India, China, or (Roman Catholic) Austria, France, Italy, or poor priest-ridden Ireland. Nothing we have said, however, of Christianity is predicated of any one section of the Universal Church; for, in our estimation, every Christian community, however small or despised (if they hold the truth as it is in Jesus), is a Church—'Wherever two or three meet together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' In every Christian Church there is, and have been, imperfections, because composed of fallible men, while all we have said of Christianity is irrespective of particular churches, and as exemplified in the pages of the New Testament, or the lives of the godly.

"But, to finish, what is it that man or society chiefly desiderates? The answer to this question may solve the query—Is Christianity suitable for man as an intellectual being, a moral agent, a member of civilised society, and as an immortal and accountable creature? We have no hesitation of at once answering these different queries in the affirmative.

"We, as stated in our introduction, equally with the Secularist work and pray for man's individual happiness and society's onward progress. In the march of humanity, the dawning upon us and all mankind of the bright day of civil and religious liberty; the disenthralling from the trammels of worn-out and used-up opinions, habits, and customs, which would be infinitely 'more honoured in the breach than in the observance'; that science may ply her studies and evolve her wonders without let or hindrance; that honest toil be fairly rewarded and appreciated; while at the basis of the whole social fabric, as a foundation, lies deep and well-principled morality, a nation's safeguard and a nation's glory. We believe in the Scriptural maxim—'Religion exalteth a nation, but sin is the reproach of any people.'

"Does true and undefiled religion, does the beautiful and all-adapting system of Christianity, not stand forth alone from all other

codes, religions, or pretended revelations, and proclaim herself the friend of universal freedom? Does she forbid or prohibit any one of the *desiderata mentioned above?* She has ever been the encourager, helper, and rewarder of every ennobling pursuit. It is only under her fostering care that God's laws and man's welfare, whether of liberty, science, or social progress, are understood or have existence.

"What is more suitable to man, as an intellectual being, than liberty of action, freedom of thought, and expression of opinion? Any system claiming to be from Heaven, which either denied or tampered with these, would not only be unlike, but *unworthy* of God to bestow. Man would no longer be a free agent, but an automaton: his agency and responsibility would both at once cease. But Christianity stands revealed in her conscious greatness and openness, challenging inquiry and soliciting investigation, saying, 'Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.' We read that the Christians of Berea were more noble than others, because they searched the Scriptures to see if those things spoken of were so. Again, 'Search,' says our Lord, 'the Scriptures,' and 'Judge ye,' says Paul, 'what I say.' If anything in Christendom has deepened and strengthened man's intellectual growth and widened the circle of human knowledge, it has been the teachings of Christianity, by the diffusion of free inquiry, the investigation of truth, the awaking of curiosity, and by bringing to light and the arena of public cognizance the deep and glorious things of God—creation, redemption, and immortality. She has thus given an impetus to the human mind, and a dignity to truth and to man, which proves it worthy of God.

"Time will not permit us to speak of what the birth of intellect has produced in science, by sea and land: her iron wonders and her textile fabrics, glorious and humanising art, or of literature and the freedom of the press, the palladium (under God) of our national and personal freedom; thence are the effects of Christianity, at least of Protestant Christianity. No country destitute of her regenerating and redeeming presence can be morally great, no country where she is corrupted and fettered has ever been free.

"Nothing is more beautiful, and, we have no hesitation in saying, nothing is more suitable to man and worthy of God, than a deep-felt and wide-spread practical morality. But having already said so much upon this point, we will only for a moment call your attention to the fact that this is Christianity's legitimate province, and here have been

her triumphs. Christianity, it has been well said, has saved the heathen tribes from extinction, by preventing their exterminating wars (*vide* Upper Canada and Raratonga). Whenever she enters a heathen land, the drunkard's hovel, the thieves' den, or the infidel's dwelling, she rescues the perishing mortal from ignorance, vice, and crime, restores the mental character and *affections*, and man to the rank of humanity. Wherever she obtains a footing, she throws her protecting ægis over the oppressed. The moment the slave touches the soil of Britain his chains drop from his hands, he stands redeemed and free. Or if not able, because of interested man, she at least softens down and mitigates his nature's wrongs, and points to heaven (see *Uncle Tom's Cabin*). She has almost, and will soon altogether, have extirpated idolatry from the face of God's fair earth. Reason never dreamed, far less attempted, such an enterprise, from the dimness of her vision and the inadequacy of her powers.

"Christianity is suitable for man when viewed as a member of civilised society, and to this we would call the Secularist's particular attention. All the duties of man, as a citizen, are, to a certain extent and sense, moral, although the relations are less from the individual to the individual than from the individual to society, relation springing from organised and civilised institutions. That man is formed for and must enjoy society is apparent, and hence the necessity for civil government. And it may be taken as a rule, that the best form of government is that which, with the least amount of restraint upon personal liberty, confers the largest amount of happiness upon the greatest numbers. But this is the system of the New Testament, and must be acknowledged as most suitable to man, because it diminishes and tries to annihilate all personal restraints, by placing the duty of obedience on a reverential regard to the authority of God.

"What is wanting, or deficient, in this heaven-sent and man-helping system, to render man noble and God-like in himself, a brother to humanity, and a moral and religious being? There is everything in Christianity which a Divine relation for man should contain, nothing unsuitable to the creature, or derogatory to the Creator. There are truths found in its pages of such magnitude, that philosophy stands amazed and delighted, and which minds of the highest order have not only embraced and believed, but expended themselves in exemplifying and recommending to others, such as a Newton, a Locke, a Bacon, a Napier, a West, and an Addison: who

all died rejoicing in the faith of the truth of the Gospel; and truths, too, which the weakest capacity may understand, admire, and by which he may be saved. Truly Christianity is suited for all ages. It is never in the rear or lagging behind the discoveries and improvement of the age (*vide* Buckland and Lyall's *Geology*, Nichol's *Nebular Hypothesis*, Layard's *Researches in Ninevah*); steam, gas, electricity, progress of opinion, and all the discoveries and inventions which have been made, never leave Christianity in the background. She keeps her pace and place, and will do, because she is Divine: never antiquated, though old. No other system of morality, or plan of man's acceptance with God, or one better adapted for the world, has during these nineteen hundred years been discovered; no, nor anything that can for a moment be compared to it. Let the Infidel himself be judge, and, in this case, 'out of his own mouth he shall be condemned.'

"When judged, she is to be judged as a whole, and not by detached and isolated sentences; no system, of either truth or fable, would stand such criticism and treatment. It must be viewed in its whole spirit, *tenor*, and *bearing;* nor should Christianity be judged by the lives and acts of its pretended followers—to wit, hypocrites and formalists, 'who have a name to live, but are dead,' upon whose hearts its regenerating influences of purity, piety, and love, have never been felt; but do as you would were you collecting specimens of shells, minerals, or plants for your cabinets or *hortus siccus*—select the finest and best developed, and from these form and draw your conclusions of their specific or generic characteristics. Take the lives, then, and conduct of those holy men and women who have adorned or are 'adorning the doctrines of God their Saviour by a life becoming His Gospel.'"

The speaker summed up as follows:—

"We may have failed to have brought conviction to your minds in this lecture of the suitableness of Christianity to man, as a mortal and immortal, or worthy of God, our common Father. This may be my fault, or it may be yours. I may have failed in my arguments, or you may shut out the truth, and resist it. Be that as it may, however, we thus *publicly* aver that the failure is either *yours* or *mine* (probably it rests with me), but it cannot be the fault or failure of Christianity. Whether we leave this hall this evening convinced or non-convinced, believers or unbelievers in Christianity's divinity or

suitableness, still it will go on, 'conquering and to conquer,' in a bright career of emancipating and disenthralling the captives of sin, and setting the prisoners free. Nothing can stop or stay her progress, which, like the advancing tide, or the sun in his upward path, rises and 'shines more and more unto the perfect day.' So Christianity, aided by the Omnipotent God, in spite of all opposition, from whatever cause, 'will have free course, and be glorified,' until the whole earth be bathed in her light, and covered with her glory.'"

CHAPTER XV.

IN WHICH TIMOTHY GETS DISGUSTED WITH HIS NEW ACQUAINTANCES.

THE impression produced upon Timothy by the lecture referred to in the last chapter was very great. He felt that the arguments were unanswerable; and when he left the hall he was altogether indisposed to join in the ridiculous criticisms of his companions. Next morning, too, on his joining them at the office, he was considerably annoyed by their remarks, and his rejoinders drew anything but complimentary answers from them.

Finding that the lecture had produced considerable impression upon others besides Timothy, and that one *old* and noted Secularist had given up his opposition to Christianity, and had even commenced to attend a place of worship, they aroused themselves, obtained the services of a "crack" propagandist of infidel opinions, and gave notice that the lecture in favour of Christianity would be answered in such a way as to cause the "blatant parson" to hide his head for

ever. The lecture was given, the "parson," among others, attending; and at the close announced that he would reply to the "reply" on a given evening, when he hoped all the secularists would attend.

This "plucky" conduct produced quite a favourable impression, and when the time arrived the hall was crowded. After briefly referring to his previous lecture, he turned his attention to the reply. Speaking of the manner in which it had been replied to, he said:—

"You did well—'the children of this world are wiser than the children of light'—to leave my arguments untouched, and confine your address, such as it was, to any garbage which you might find floating on the surface of political or Christian society. While, however, I admire your caution, I cannot but censure your honesty; in a word, Sir," addressing the chairman, "I scarcely think myself well used or handsomely treated in this affair. I had, it seems, too fondly hoped that the gentleman selected to reply to my lecture would not only be well read and at home in general information, but be skilled especially in defending secularity at all points; intimate with the Scriptures, acquainted with the arguments used by Bible defenders and infidel writers of the past and present age.

"But, instead of my hopes and expectations being realised, I find—I will not trust myself to speak of the abilities of the gentleman who opposed me. Perhaps he is *more to be pitied than blamed; if he did his best, and if what we listened to was really his best, and he be the 'crack' man of the society, then I have no hesitation in saying, 'bad is the best.'* If the farago of commonplaces, politics, with a dash of something, everything, and nothing, be all that secularists and atheists have to urge against Christianity, then secularity is not what I give it credit for, either in talents, truth, or ingenuity. I would also delicately insinuate that the *devil* is grossly libelled if, as affirmed by some, he has had any hand in the concocting of this precious society: he is no such blunderer. Had he been consulted, we would have had talents at least, with ingenuity and genius, all mingling, racy, and sparkling with wit and sophistry. But here,—why the bait would

neither deceive nor decoy a curmudgeon. I only wonder that any one can be found obtuse enough to spend an hour within these walls. Why, Sir, it is punishment for burglary to sit for an hour-and-a-half listening to the rigmarole which I heard the other evening. Why do you not rather in these winter evenings form yourselves into singing-classes, or go and see your sweethearts; and, in the glorious summer nights, go down the river or rail twenty minutes out of London smoke and din, than sit within these dank and dreary walls to hear the most insipid nonsense, or so-called arguments and opinions, raked from the kennel, and resuscitated from the ashes of the past, which have been answered and refuted hundreds of times? Why, Sir, to answer the strain—for argument I cannot call it—of the lecturer, would certainly be pouring water on a drowned mouse—a waste of precious time. But, since I promised to reply, I will so far redeem my pledge as condescend to take up a few of the points which seemed to touch the gall and arouse the lecturer's spleen.

"Now, be it understood that I have altogether changed my mode of attack and style. My last lecture was all honey and olive oil, so seductive, as we were told, as to seduce some old hands from this society whom, it was believed, would not be taken by chaff; nevertheless, although success did attend my *suaviter in modo*, I have determined to take the opposite tack, or *fortiter in re*. I will try what *banter* can achieve; a weapon which I can not only use with any Secularist, but which I believe to be better suited for my opponent's apprehension than either Scripture or logic.

"Our lecturer began by drawing a caricature of Christianity, which, according to him, had never been defined or described. I am certain no man except an Infidel could have recognised that heaven-born and heaven-sent system, after she was bedaubed and disguised by every foul name, and exhibited as having neither character nor shame. The statements were so very new, *outré*, and startling, that I find a difficulty indeed in taking up his tangled and ravelled hasp. I have heard of an *ollo podrida;* I have also read Shakespeare's inimitable cauldron scene in *Macbeth;* but in none of them have I ever met anything to equal the heterogeneous contents of that Friday evening's medley. We had, for the first course, in the argument against Christianity, the 'low state of the working man's wages,' 'war,' 'politics,' and his own family; 'women in Nottingham destroying their infants.' We were next regaled with the degradation, 'ignorance

and brutality of the working classes,' 'the unhappy position of clerks,' and the repeated *ad nauseam* assertions of there being 'no God,' because he, the lecturer, could not understand Him, and that 'Christianity had nothing to do with morality.' And, by way of dessert, we had the *recherché* 'information' that 'intemperance,' 'juvenile depravity,' and 'husbands beating their wives,' were results from Sabbath-school teaching, 'City Missions,' with other singular evils, all flowing like a stream from that 'detested and hated book, the Bible, and the preaching of Christianity.' Hear that, ye unfledged logicians and readers of *Punch!* You may suppose that I was doing injustice to the lecturer's abilities; it is true, I should have mentioned, that looking again at his cranium, I perceive that he has credulity and imagination very fully developed. This fact is the only solution I can give to his wondrous idea of causes, and believing in strange effects. I do, indeed, think he mistook his *forte* in becoming a Secularist, or, at all events, a lecturer in defence of Atheism, with the idiosyncrasy which God has given him. This, I am convinced, *is less his fault than his misfortune;* his antipathy to religion degenerates into virulence, and sometimes into nonsense, which, although delivered with warmth and rant, is neither, on that account, argument or reason.

"But I will not tax your patience longer, but will, with the assistance of God, shake and scatter the ill-assorted and flimsy materials of his address to the four winds of heaven, and teach him such a lesson which, while he breathes, he will not forget, and learn for the future, with shame and fear, to meet not only a minister of the Gospel, but a Sabbath scholar, who knows his Bible and Shorter Catechism.

"We were informed that the lecturer did not believe in a God, nor had any idea of living again; but, because he did not understand this, or did not wish another thing, why may not I believe in the one and prepare for the other? Or, because he does not understand this or that truth, is that fact to be denied or become a nonentity, wholly depending on the obtuseness or clearness of his perception; does the understanding or non-understanding of the lecturer alter the material of any proposition? Were everything to be denied or become negatived simply because he did not understand or believe it, what of Nature, science, or art could remain?—only that small portion which came within the reach of his knowledge or experience. But am I or others to be measured and tied down to the lecturer's knowledge, belief, or

consciousness? Certainly not. *Would not this be making an iron shoe according to the measure of his own foot, and compelling all to wear it?* I may convey to the lecturer much valuable information, but I cannot give him understanding to perceive it. There are some minds which cannot, either from want of depth or extreme narrowness, comprehend very simple truths; others are so warped by prejudice, perverted by sin, and blinded by Satan, that they will not believe truth, however clear and patent, lest they be convinced, and have to leave their sins; others, either from the malformation or the peculiar organisation of their reasoning faculties, facts and phenomena the most patent to ordinary minds are to them dim and vague, or altogether negatived.

"If the lecturer be sincere in the belief of his creed, and is determined to believe nothing but what he understands and is patent to the senses, or what he calls positive philosophy—a word of which he seems to be very fond, and in the use of which he is like a shoemaker always crying out, 'Nothing like leather'—his range of information, and therefore his creed, must indeed be extremely limited, and gives us at once a key to the man's character. He believes only what he knows: we ourselves have heard him affirm that any amount of testimony, from any number of credible witnesses, of a fact which they saw, and of which they were competent to judge, he would not credit their statement except he himself saw, walked round it, and, I believe, felt it.

"So farewell to all human testimony! All abstract terms, and metaphysical arguments; all history, travels, and voyages; and farewell geography, my much-loved science, geology, and astronomy. There is no such place as America; Uncle Jonathan and Sam Slick are mere abstractions; nor yet a 'Land o' Cakes,' a France, Russia, or Italy, any more than a fossil whale or Appenines in the moon; Mazzini, the lecturer's friend, had neither sire nor ancestor, nor yet the lecturer a great-grandfather. The lecturer told us he would believe nothing but what came under his senses, and we were told that he was no traveller—nay, further, he affirms, he believes nothing but what he understands and has experienced; all the past is therefore a blank and the future a negation, and the present only *is* to the extent of what he understands and touches. We therefore need not be surprised at his doubting a heaven, a hell, and the existence of a God, when he doubts the existence of continental Europe, his own ancestry, and possibly his own existence. . . . . .

"Rather than acknowledge an Omnipotent and Superintending Maker and Preserver of all things, animate and inanimate, our lecturer believes, or says he believes, that this fair and beautiful earth, with its design, adaptations, and unique variety; and those magnificent heavens, with all their starry hosts rolling in regularity; the varied seasons which crown the rolling year; those beautiful and delicately-pencilled and tinted flowers, and those rich and delicious fruits; the varied landscape, bathed in heaven's glorious sunshine; these bodies of ours, in their mechanism so 'fearfully and wonderfully made'; these minds and faculties, which almost grasp the past, present, and even the future, which can measure the heavens, encircle the earth with science, and garnish it with art—that all these arrangements, modifications, and wonderful adaptations were not made, were their own maker, or do not exist, or any other pure absurdity. To what sad shifts is the Atheist driven by denying a first cause!

"Who can (not speaking of revelation) pick up a blade of grass, examine a drop of rain or a globule of dew, or contemplate the mechanism of the human eye, his own hand, a seed-pod, a carnation's dye, an insect's wing, or the strange leadings of his own life, and not see in all these designs infinite wisdom, almighty power, and unlimited goodness? 'Blind must that man be,' said the French Infidel, 'who can lift a straw and deny a God.'

"If the lecturer had merely said, 'The works of Nature surpass my comprehension, and much more the Being who called them into existence; whoever He may be, and whatever His nature, perfections, and essence, I am not exactly able to conceive, nor can I understand His character,' we would have joined with him and said, 'Who by searching can find out God?' Can the finite comprehend the infinite, or a part be equal to the whole? But to deny His being and perfections because our finite minds cannot grasp them, is simply childish and ridiculous. This principle, if carried into practice in every-day life, would certainly subject the denier either to the care of his friends, or to the bare walls of St. Luke's, or a change of air over at Bethlehem.

We were next, with a flourish of trumpets, told that the lecturer '*had no faith in prayer*.' I see nothing in this statement either surprising or wonderful; to him it is only natural, and what was to be expected. Two or three reasons might be assigned, although we had none from him, for this anomaly. He may be, like Burns, 'Baith

dead, sweir, and wretched ill o' t.' But why should it seem strange that an Atheist—that is, one who neither believes in angel, devil, or spirit—should have no faith in prayer? The very essence of prayer is faith—'No man can come to God except he believes that He is.' How can any Atheist pray? To whom can he pray? to a nonentity? to one who does not exist, nor ever did? If the lecturer had said he prayed, I would, upon his own principle, not have believed him. I might ask, To whom do you address your prayers, if you still insist? When on your bended knees, how do you frame, and what is the matter of your prayers, since you believe there is no God?

"But because the lecturer has no faith in a God, and therefore none in prayer, am I and other Christians to be compelled to believe in his negations? Or because he shuts his eyes and will not believe his senses, nor yet use his natural reason, or come to the Scriptures of truth in a teachable spirit and unprejudiced mind, are we to do the same? Whatever his wants, and the depths of his sorrows may be, the amount of his trials and afflictions in body, circumstances, spirit, or relations (and he, being human, is not exempt from his share), we deeply pity him that he has no stay or support upon which he can lean, no Father of mercy and wisdom to whom he can look up and commit himself, no future to which he can look for rest and reward; in a word, no atonement for sin, no throne of grace, nor Saviour's love, nor comforting Spirit. In the sincere spirit of Christian charity we pray for him.

"But another of the gentlemen who replied to me stated his objection to prayer with something more like an argument, when he said the 'God of the Bible is represented as unchanging, how then can prayer have any effect upon Him?' We reply that prayer is lifted up by man and offered to God for different reasons. It is not to *inform* God we tell Him of our wants, and ask what we require; nor yet to change His mind, which we also, with the Secularist, believe to be immutable from His wisdom and power. But we pray that we may have the frame of mind and suitableness of spirit, *i.e.*, earnestness, which God requires and respects in His suppliants; as a parent with the child that he loves—yes, even the lecturer's child, he, as a father, we believe, would rather his child, with filial love, respect, and confidence, would proffer his lisping and half-formed request and say, 'Father, if you please, give me so-and-so, or allow me this or that,' than the disrespectful and ungrateful demeanour which the self-willed

child exhibits, from a gift bestowed unsolicited, and received without thanks. Has the lecturer never experienced or observed anything of this from individuals, and among families? A gift which is worth receiving is certainly worth asking: it is often from the tone and expression of earnestness that we become truly acquainted with the necessity of the implorer. God, 'the Searcher of all hearts,' needs not this information, but He expects His believing and praying children not only to be in earnest, but to feel their wants. Hence the command, 'Ask, and it shall be given.'

"Again, the gentleman seemed either to forget or to be ignorant of the Scripture plan of praying, or asking and receiving. The Christian believes that the means and the end are as closely linked as the shadow and the body which it adumbrates, or as cause and effect, *i.e.*, that the seeking and finding are tied up in the same bundle, were and are arranged in the Divine mind at the same time, and are dependent upon each other. If we knock it shall be opened, or whatever we ask according to His will in faith it shall be given; or 'if we ask and receive not, it is because we ask amiss.' God often, in mercy, keeps back what we, in our ignorance, have requested, and bestows, in His providence and grace, what we failed to ask—'Lord, teach us how to pray,' both as to matter and manner. And let me inform the lecturer that it is not words which, in the sight of God, constitute prayer; it is the feeling of our want, the looking up in faith, the glistening of a tear in the wet-shod eye or trembling upon the cheek, or, it may be, the deep-drawn sigh from a bosom bursting with a load of sorrow. These God sees, interprets, and answers—glory and gratitude be ascribed to His holy Name!

"The lecturer next took up a tirade, both long and oft-repeated, against the character of the Supreme Being (in whom he believes not), as being most awfully cruel, detestable, and barbarous. Why? because He is called the 'Lord of Hosts,' and because transgressors *are* threatened with everlasting punishment. I really wonder he did not adopt Miss C——'s or Panthea's creed of many gods, or Mr. Holyoake's theory of two Christs, which would have rid him of the cruel and fighting God. I merely throw out the hint; it may be of use to him should he think of giving another lecture, which I rather doubt. But how strange for a lecturer to stand up and attempt to teach men *with beards on their faces* that 'the phrase, "Lord of Hosts," is equivalent to a God of fighting men,' *i.e.*, their leader and general. It strikes me

that the lecturer has been reading of the wonderful female garment at Tréves, which, within these few years, was consecrated generalissimo of the Catholic forces. *The best mode of meeting and treating such ignorance would be the birch—yes, I would whip a school-boy who made such tripping in getting up his lessons.* I may as well, however, inform the lecturer that Jehovah is called the 'Lord of Hosts,' not because of armies, blood-shedding, and battles, but because He is the Creator of the heavens and all their hosts, *i.e.*, the stars of heaven, which are called hosts, because numbered by His wisdom, and marshalled by His power.

"I am not at all surprised to hear God's holy and blessed Name maligned by some, because He has said He will punish transgressors, nor shall He allow the guilty to go unpunished, when we consider that the despisers are chiefly those who have made themselves obnoxious to His wrath, and amenable to punishment by their iniquities. Does any man, except an Infidel, in whose heart and life there is nothing but enmity to God—that God, too, on whom he hangs for life and breath, and all things—see anything horrible and barbarous in God, as the Moral Governor and Sovereign of all creatures, vindicating his aspersed and maligned character and violated law, in the punishment of rebels who have risen against His authority, of men who have mocked His name, despised His mercy, and scorned His revelation? . . . . . .

"The next object of the lecturer's peculiar abhorrence was the 'detestable Bible,' which he affirmed was the fruitful source of the evils which afflict society, and are the disgrace of mankind—to which he also added, 'ghosts' and 'hanging.' We have no hesitation in averring that had our lecturer lived down at, or near Deal, he would, no doubt with equal truth, have affirmed that the Bible was the cause of the Goodwin Sands having accumulated in that peculiar locality, to the obstruction of navigation, and that some of the encroachments of the sea between Beechy Head and Brighton had mysterious connection with the Tract Depository in Paternoster Row. I think we may place the lecturer as some curious specimen under a shade upon the same shelf with a clergyman of whom I read, who attributed the potato blight to the Maynooth Grant. I am inclined, however, to believe that the lecturer is less an Atheist than a Papist. At least, in Roman Catholic and bigoted Ireland, France, Austria, and Italy, every plot and imaginary conspiracy is supposed to be hatched in Bible-reading

Britain and America; disease, too, and unnatural phenomena, if not generated, are intensified by the 'colportage' of the Bible. . . . .

"Every one, we have no doubt, has his hobby (*quanquem trahit vult voluptatem*), and every one, we have no doubt, has his *phobia*. We have read of some whose antipathy was a cat, a beetle, or a spider, and even some of particular flowers; had the lecturer said he could not bear to hear the sharpening of a saw, or a 'caterwauling' under his bedroom window, when about to resign himself to the arms of Morpheus; or had he informed us that his antipathy was a slip-shod girl or a blowzy-faced boy, I could have sympathised with his aversion, as a being of the same common materials and feelings with myself.

"But what do you suppose is the lecturer's particular *phobia?* Let it only appear before his organs of sight, his eyes dilate, his cheeks turn pale, the whole man trembles like Nebuchadnezzar when he saw the handwriting on the wall. You will suppose that it must be something infra-natural which could cause this; but no, it is nothing more than simply the 'Word of God'; that Word which tells him he is a sinner, and that there is a Saviour; that he must reform his manners and conform his life to the Gospel, ere he can see God's face in mercy. Strange though it may seem, our lecturer is a 'Bibliophobist.'

"This, no doubt, is a disease, or, if not, there must be some strong cause to produce this strong aversion to this, the best of books. It is possible—I do not judge his motives, nor can I reach his heart, that is God's prerogative, and His Spirit's province; to his Maker and Judge I leave him, 'to his own Master he stands or falls'—it is possible, I say, that the hatred and detestation felt, or said to be felt, to the Word of God is not so much from its supposed influence on men's wages, juvenile depravity, wars, and polity, as the great unredeeming fact which cannot, like Lady Macbeth's spot of blood, be washed out; which is its unequivocal condemnation of sin, its threatenings and thunders of punishment and pain, because it demands holiness of heart, lip, and life; its humbling of human reason in demanding self-denial, man's salvation by another; because it proclaims a God all-seeing and a God all-just, an hereafter, a hell, and eternal woe. Probably these may be the true causes of man's hatred to the book—'the carnal mind is enmity against God'—and not the make-believe of its 'barbarities and partialities.' . . . . . .

"The lecturer next took his stand and keenly displayed his ire

in rudely condemning Christianity because of its *metaphysics* (a crabbed and learned word); he hates metaphor, too, with equal feeling, in religion. He reminds me very strongly of the soldier under the lash, who, wherever the drummer struck, was displeased—it was either too high or too low; so the lecturer is about as difficult to satisfy with Christianity, and me its defender. But as he did not deign to enlighten us, by defining what he meant by the terms, I might, upon his mode of reasoning, either deny them or allow them to remain unanswered; but I will not treat him so cavalierly, I can afford to be both handsome and liberal, and charitable, too; it is the Christian's duty, it has ever been the Christian's character, and in this discussion I will use it as my privilege. *Metaphor, if I understood him aright, which I confess was a little difficult, from his want of method*, signified anything which was not patent to the senses. He did well, when he began his address, to inform us he knew, like Shakespeare, little of Latin, less of Greek, and nothing of mathematics. I wish he only had learned the simple postulates and axioms of that noble science, he would then have known that the most certain, because logical, and demonstrative evidence which can be offered and affirmed of magnitudes, relation of quantities, angles and solids and distances, are drawn from mathematics. Now these, to all intents and purposes, are metaphysical. Has he any idea of a draughtsman's business in an engineering establishment, the science of navigation, or an actuary's profession? Or does he trouble his head, and engross his precious time, upon the issues and settlement of the Turko-Russian question, or the study of politics? I know he does, because a great portion of his lecture was taken up with political details of which I know little, and care less. Now what are these, or anything which lies beyond the reach of the senses, but metaphysics? What is the title of a publication or fly-sheet which advocates the peculiar views of the secularist—is it not called the *Reasoner?* and *very wonderful* are some of its reasonings. *I can assure you of* THAT *fact!* What does it treat of, and rest upon, but theories and speculations, and some of these the wildest that ever *entered the noddle of a Bethlehemite.* And yet this hater of metaphysics hugs, and clasps, and believes this abortive, misshapen, and misleared elphin, and from it draws his so-called arguments to overthrow—save the mark!—Christianity. He comes here, crammed like an Oxford would-be graduate, ignorant of all except his points, and these imperfect, and

plays his part upon this platform, in words, wind, and warmth, which are neither founded in, nor patent to the senses—not even common-sense—and are all but broken and disjointed metaphor; but, be it understood, of the secularist school, caste, and complexion. None of the metaphors of Aristotle, Hutchinson, Berkley, or Stuart—works of which he is probably profoundly ignorant—but something *jumbled and churned together like soap-suds and tar, while he blandly wishes you to believe that the effect or result is fresh butter.* This kind of argument and reasoning may be esteemed philosophy in the meridian of 'Halls of Science,' but with men of sense and common reading are simply ridiculous, and, as reasons against Christianity, purely absurd.

"If I did not misunderstand the lecturer, we were informed he was engaged by a respectable firm of Christian employers, who used him kindly though he was an Atheist. This I can easily understand and believe: a Christian can pity, and have a charitable feeling towards the ill-informed and erring. A clerk or book-keeper, however, should be well versed in calculations—at least in the first five rules of arithmetic and single entry. Now, let me ask the metaphysical phobist, What is the multiplication-table, the rule of three, or the extraction of the cube root, but metaphysics?

"I should like much to know how a knowledge of any extent could be acquired of mind as distinct from matter; or how any information could be obtained of or about the human soul, its actings, longings, and hopes, its fears or final destiny; or what could we know, or how could we speak, of the spirit world and the glorious future; or become in any way acquainted with the character and attributes of the Eternal God, if we be not allowed the use of metaphysical terms and a knowledge of the universe beyond the senses?

"How is it possible for any system, whatever its name or character, to be subjected to an examination, its influences upon its believers, its origin and growth, but must have in it that which is beyond the cognizance of the senses? The lecturer may affirm that in this society there is nothing metaphysical, but this can only be upon the singular assumption that there has been no past and that there is no future—that man possesses no soul, no mind nor understanding. All this may be affirmed, but who will credit the statement? Any man may call spirits from the vasty deep, but will they come? Every man cannot, like the lecturer, deny his feelings and ignore his soul,

that he may get rid of his responsibility and his God. Let me assure him, whether he receives or rejects the information, while man is a thinking being, is conscious of a soul, agitated with fears or elevated with hopes, he must believe in a God and look forward to a hereafter, and consequently be a believer in metaphysics. By what name are we to denote knowledge drawn from certain fundamental principles in physiology, mental perceptions and convictions, flowing from contemplation, consciousness, the reports of others, or human testimony, revelation, together with what we call by its proper name the phenomena of psychology, if we are not to be allowed to extend our knowledge beyond the range of the five senses? Hence, in every department of science, art, and existence, we must either have use of the term metaphysics, or something equivalent, to denote that which outlies the positive philosophy of the secularist.

"But after all this time spent in shadow-fighting, where, let me ask, are the metaphors and metaphysics which are so objectionable to the lecturer? to what portion of Scripture does he refer? Let me jog his memory by quoting a text or two. Is it 'Do good to all men,'—'Live soberly, righteously, and godly,'—'Let him that stole steal no more,'—'Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,'—'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,'—'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God,'—'If thine enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst give him drink,'—'Abstain from all appearance of evil,'—'No drunkard or whoremonger shall enter the kingdom of heaven,'—'As a man sows here, so shall he reap hereafter;' or, to change the preceptive and take the winning and inviting, 'God so loved the world that He sent His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish,'—'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,'—'Why will ye die?'—'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked: turn to Me and live,'—and 'Without holiness no man can see the Lord.' If we turn from the preceptive to the moral, or from the moral to the exemplary, we find nothing but plain lessons of fact, addressed to matter-of-fact men. Ah! it is difficult 'to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear,' or to wash an Ethiope white by the aid of cosmetics; but no more so than to substantiate the charges of metaphor and metaphysics made against the glorious Gospel, as a cause for its rejection.

"We learned—what we must confess was altogether new to us—that the Koran was a most wonderful stride in advance of the

antiquated and ought-to-be-obsolete Bible. We were not, however, favoured with the particular point on which the advance, or in what the improvement consisted; but we would infer from the juxtaposition of the topics, that the Koran had less of metaphysics in its dogmas, and more morality, than the New Testament. I presume the lecturer has studied Sale's edition, and is perfectly conversant with that melange of fable and legend, Old and New Testament doctrines and history, so that what I merely hint at shall at once recur to the lecturer's recollection. That I may afford him a treat, what does he think of the metaphysical story of the 'cow;' the successive layers of heavens, like the coats of an onion (borrowed from the Egyptian Cosmogony); or the wonderful 'mare;' not forgetting the 'bridge,' spanning, like the tubular concern at the Menai Straits, the gulf below, no broader than a Turkish scimitar. After this hint, being a positive philosophy man, he must feel rather all-overish next time he sits down to read or eulogise the Koran. But I may have mistaken the lecturer. His ideas of metaphysics may be the being permitted 11,000 black-eyed houris, to fan his face and comb his beard; for although he is smooth-faced at present, he shall not lack that appendage in the paradise of all true believers. It is true, there is nothing of this matter-of-fact or positive philosophy found in Christianity, nor promised to its followers, and hence, in the lecturer's estimation, it is too metaphysical, *i.e.*, too pure and spiritual; but, not to insinuate, I rather believe that the gentleman misunderstood the meaning of the terms and their application.

"But we were still further enlightened, by becoming acquainted with another fact, that Mahomet and Koran were effete and obsolete; for, harlequin-like, in a moment he doffs the turban and sash, and assumes the garb of Joe Smith, and confesses that the Book of Mormon is as far in advance of the Koran as the latter was ahead of the Bible. Now, as I am not sufficiently acquainted with the peculiar tenets of this new sect, of their character and creed, I can only speak from report. From the little that I do know of Joe Smith and his adherents, I am no admirer of the system; this probably is my misfortune, but I am (unlike the lecturer) open to conviction, so anxious am I to obtain information on this subject, that I will willingly appoint a night or two next week (if well) for the lecturer to come to 'the Manse' and instruct me in the morality of Mormonism.

"Had mad Tom of Canterbury published a book according to the

lecturer's theory of metaphysical morality, it must have as far surpassed Mormon as that did the Koran, that is in arithmetical ratio. He affirmed that he preferred the Koran to the Bible for its morality; why did he not also prefer it for the gentle and persuasive means, *i.e.*, argument and moral beauty, which it inculcates, in the conversion of the unbeliever, to wit, that all who did not embrace its faith were to be exterminated by fire and sword? In comparing the fifth chapter of Matthew with any portion of the Koran, and with cool and dispassionate judgment assigning a preference for the latter, we can say little more than, *De gustibus non est disputandum.* Might I not say to the lecturer, in the words of some writer—Sherlock, I think—'Go into thy chamber, and compare Mahomet, crimsoned with blood, at the head of a brutal and ignorant soldiery, destroying and exterminating all who differed from him in opinion, and who would not acknowledge his pretended mission from God, with the meek and patient Jesus, praying for all, doing good to all, healing the afflicted, comforting the sorrowing, feeding the hungry, forgiving and dying for His enemies.'

"But to compare and give the preference to the book of Joe Smith, of Mahomet, or any other human production, I must confess surprises me indeed; to prefer the heterogeneous ravings of mad men or bad men with that Book which stands forward in the nineteenth century unscathed, because invulnerable, like the granite rocks which bound our land, against which winds and waves may lash and howl and spend their fury, but in vain. So this Book, after ages and generations of opposers, who have denied and blasphemed it, torn, trampled, and burned it, is still, in all its entirety, the Word of the living God, the philosopher's *vade mecum*, the intellectual man's delight, the afflicted man's companion, the poor man's charter, and the peasant's hope. Long may the 'Big ha' Bible,' which our fathers prized, and for which they bled, be found in our dwellings, and its doctrines in our hearts!

"The lecturer next, with a side wind, attacked Christianity in denouncing her followers for their rigid and inflexible rules of discipline in the admission of members into their communion and fellowship; that the faith and Christian experience, the life and character of the candidate, must not only be known, but thoroughly investigated, and except quadrating with the peculiar opinions of the church, whatever their moral character, they are rejected. The lecturer may have *his reasons* for expressing himself so warmly on this point: we have

met with soured and disappointed men who happened to be vetoed or black-balled in their early life, and who, from their nature or wounded vanity, could never forgive nor forget it. We are not in a position to insinuate that our friend the lecturer ever made such an attempt; but had he, with his present views of God, the soul, eternity, and the Bible, made the attempt and been rejected, we are only surprised he could feel anything other than expectation realised, and glad of being free from any Bible-reading and Bible-believing fraternity. He then favoured us, I suppose by way of contrast, with something like the mode in which Secularists are admitted into this society; he said an aspirant of Atheism was never asked his faith or belief in this or that, but only that his conduct was known.

"I am not surprised at either the mode or statement, because it is a well-known rule of this society that the novice may be Deist, Atheist, Polytheist, Infidel, or Sceptic, but it is a *sine qua non* that he be a denier of the Bible; and if he cannot go the 'entire animal,' he must at least be no Christian: that, like a dead fly in the ointment, would vitiate all other qualities whatsoever. In a system in which there are no doctrines, or faith, or religious opinions, nor anything of a moral tendency, why should there be questions of a religious nature put? I cannot see any peculiar merit in this society's neither asking nor examining their candidates for a confession of faith, when neither the society collectively nor the members individually have either creed or belief. But, gentlemen, I do you injustice; your enterant, as already hinted, must be a Freethinker, *i.e.*, an Infidel, and, from what I have heard from the lecturer, have some very peculiar and rather a 'leetle' ultra-political opinions, with which the other 'necessary' is, if I understand men and things, tantamount to a test or criteria of discipleship.

"The lecturer knows, or ought to know, that no company, association, or lodge, can be formed into fellowship, or long continue to be so, except there be laws and regulations upon which government and order are founded; in a word, what is the *rationale* of clubs, political and social societies, but that men holding the same opinions, having the same habits, tastes, and modes of thinking, may meet and associate together, apart and separate from others of a contrary description? This is so patent and natural that we are surprised the lecturer should make it an objection against Christianity; or is he ignorant of the ornithological fact that 'birds of a feather flock together?' Or

does the lecturer not know that Whigs and Radicals are not admitted into the Carlton, nor Tories into the Reform Clubs? There are no Christian members of this society, nor am I aware of any Secularist being a member of a Christian Church, so I might retort and say, 'I nor any other Christian, would not be admitted into this fraternity if I held opinions heterodox to its principles.' Were I to say, which I would, claiming admission into this society, 'I believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of the living God, and am amenable for its reception or rejection,' would not the lecturer be the very first man to rise up and say, '*It's all very well, Mr. Black, but you don't lodge here.*'

"Hence, upon the principles above stated, creeds and confessions of faith are necessary, and are, either tacitly or ostensibly, prevalent; and from the Church of Christ, being an association of men and women believing Christianity to be from God, and feeling in their hearts a testimony of its truth, more powerful and convincing than the best written works on the external evidences of its genuineness and authenticity. We say, from this common ground and point of union of 'one faith, one Lord, and one baptism,' they must of necessity have a common creed, *i.e.*, that peculiar and to them orthodox interpretation which they believe to be consonant with the Scriptures, otherwise the tie which binds them would be wanting, and they would present the very same features, in the variety of their antagonism, as this infant society affords this evening, with its chequered appearance of Atheist, Deist, and Polytheist: a circumstance which will soon, or I am no prophet, present you as a rare specimen of sixes and sevens, or blow—which is more likely—your fraternity into that nonentity which, according to your belief, is your doom, only a little sooner than you expected. Water deprived of its pellicle would be scattered like dust, and you also know that chaff, when separated from the corn, is dispersed by the winds, and only fit for burning.

"We had next a treat; and, I must say, a very *recherché* one too. Really, Solomon, little did you know the future when you said there was nothing new under the sun—ah! had you lived in our day, and been privileged to hear the lecturer reply to my address, you would have 'looked unutterable things,' for speaking was out of question. Hear the oracular and logical proposition, which was enunciated with a wise look and a physician-like shake of the head—'*It is absurd to believe in repentance!*' He, like the Pythian Priestess, of Delphos, to her gaping and credulous inquirers, delivered himself of this ambiguous

sentence; and then, when all were on the tip-toe of expectation, his proof, like Hamlet's ghost, 'melted into thin air,' while he, with a celerity and tact for which I give him credit, assumed a new character and took a new subject. Since an avowed hater of kirks and conventicles, it's likely he might have treated himself, during the holidays, to the pantomimes, and, being struck by the wonderful transformations and jumps of the party-coloured gentlemen who wield the lath, he might very naturally think that we should not leave the hall without our penn'orth, and therefore amused us with some rather singular changes and leaps; for, having enunciated that repentance was absurd, and 'never did no good,' we heard of him at Navoo, in the far West, courting and coquetting Joe Smith, his concubines, and his angels, and from that to Canterbury, without staying a single night at the 'Tabard' to praise or dispraise, I forget which, mad Tom; and, although I have thought the matter over, I am yet unable to see the sequence between repentance being absurd, the City of the Mormons, and the stipend of the minister of the first charge of Canterbury.

We reluctantly omit the lecturer's remarks on the subject of repentance.

"The next point to which we had our attention directed was, it appeared to us, very important. We heard it urged by two different speakers in this hall what may be thus stated—'*A man cannot believe against his will.*' This is no new objection, but one which we have heard from professing Christians, who might have known their Bibles better. *Faith or belief is emphatically stated in Scripture to be the gift of God*, and imparted on conditions which is simply seeking God to grant, and using means for its obtainment; I mean, of course, 'saving faith,' because what is called 'historic and the faith of miracles' rest upon evidence of another nature, and are followed by very different effects. But, says the Secularist, 'I cannot believe in that of which I have no idea, or if the evidence of an assumed fact is not sufficiently clear and authenticated.'

"I at once grant that it would be absurd to ask a man to believe that which is contrary to his reason, of which he had never heard, or of which he could form no apprehension, or where there was a lack of evidence. These objections I can understand, and with the objector concur. Scripture, as well as reason, seems to me to justify this view, and the former to hinge much of man's responsibility upon the very

fact, 'Ye will not come to me,' says our Lord; showing us that the will is, to a certain extent, under our power, *i.e.*, guided and directed by reason, facts, and experience, or may be influenced by hope, fear, or the evidence of the senses, or human testimony, all of which enlighten the mind, and must therefore give impulse and direction to the will.

"Again, that ye cannot believe because of the want of evidence. If this be applied to Scripture or to Christianity, I at once say 'I do not believe the statement. I do not believe you have given the subject a fair and full examination. I do not believe you have come to this Book with an unprejudiced mind, to become acquainted with its author, to learn its doctrines, and a desire to be an heir of its salvation.' Or if you did, have you prayed over it, beseeched and wept and cried that you might know and feel its truth?

"When the Secularist affirmed he could not believe the Scriptures because they lacked evidence, I should wish to know how many authors he had studied, and how many works he has read to master a knowledge of the evidences of revealed truth—whether was it *Watson's Apology for the Bible* or *Paine's Attack*, which had most of his attention? I might ask, without running over a catalogue of Infidel or other writers, have Tollitson, Barrow, Wilberforce, Paley, Campbell, Waterland, Leland, Gregory, and Chalmers been thoroughly examined and understood? Now I am in earnest when I say that a man mounting a platform to attack Christianity and defend Atheism who has not read, and in some measure become acquainted, not only with the system which he assaults, but with the arguments of its defenders, should not be *tolerated to occupy our time*, or in any way entitled to our attention. I should also wish to know how many years the lecturer studied, and how many editions of the Divine Word he collated, to discover its errors, interpolations, and spurious readings; how many commentaries and Bible-expositors of this and other countries have passed through his hands? Has he read everything on which he could lay his hands treating of and upon this most important subject ere he came to this conclusion, by conviction, that Christianity lacked evidence of being the revealed Word of God? Let us say it was after years of painful study, because of the importance of the subject, and because upon this his immortal destiny (if he has a soul, which he denies) depended. Besides, I should have wished much to have seen the Secularist a little more diffident—true genius and

extensive reading are always modest and unpretending—and after every effort and means were used, still it would have become the lecturer to have been diffident of his own judgment; he might be wrong, and therefore, at least, leave himself open to further light and conviction.

"It is assumed by the Secularist that, because he *will not* believe what he might, therefore he is non-accountable, or no longer a moral agent. We shall, for a moment, condescend to enlighten him upon this point. Moral government is the influence of law upon accountable creatures. It includes a law-giver, accountable subjects, and law intelligibly revealed and maintained by rewards and punishments, according to the character and deeds of the subjects. The faculties of understanding, conscience, and choice, constitute, beyond dispute, an accountable agent, and their existence is a decisive evidence of a free agency, as much so as the position of the five senses are of the existence of our body; and nothing is inconsistent with free agency, or annihilates the credit of its existence, which does not destroy one or more of these faculties of the soul. Law, as the moral government, includes precepts and sanctions, intelligibly revealed; the precept is directory, disclosing and pointing to what is to be done. The sanctions are influential; they present motives and inducements to obedience, included in the comprehensive terms, 'rewards and punishments.' But to have influence, the precepts and motives must be presented to the mind, and urged upon the understanding. The law, in all its parts, must be intelligible, otherwise it is no law. A law may, however, be unknown and yet obligatory, *i.e.*, when the ignorance is voluntary, from sensualism, prejudice, or direct hatred to the truth, what Scripture so graphically denounces as 'shutting the eyes and stopping the ears, lest they should be converted, and I should heal them.' But where the ignorance, after every method has been used to overcome it, is unavoidable, there can be no longer obligation, nor yet culpability—'for where there is no law, there is no transgression.' The influence of law, as the medium of moral government, is the influence of motives in accountable creatures, and the effect of this influence is always the active exercise of free agency, because it is the influence of persuasion only, and results only in choice, which, in the presence of the understanding and conscience, is free agency. If motives were coercive of choice, moral government would be impossible; in a word, our view of moral government is simply this—*the influence of law upon the volition or will and conduct of an intelligent and accountable being.*

"But this hated and detested Book contains the law of a moral government, which is urged upon man's consideration, is intelligibly communicated, and therefore obligatory upon all; so that none—and of course the Secularist—upon any excuse or denial, can shake himself free of his responsibility to man, or his accountability to God. The Scriptures reveal God's glory in the exhibition of His character and attributes, but the plan of human redemption is that peculiar action or that theatre upon which He chooses to display His wonderful illustrations of love and mercy, and this plan, which includes the system of moral law, also forms the basis of man's obedience and reward. God has there revealed Himself a law-giver and sovereign; His power in creation, preservation, and salvation are exhibited, not, however, as abstract qualities, but as moral attributes, illustrated and administered under a moral government, and man, the subject of these laws, is always, in Scripture, recognised as an accountable agent for his belief or unbelief of revealed truth. How otherwise, it might be asked, could justice be displayed were there no laws and no responsible agents; or mercy, were there no transgression; or truth, were there no intelligent mind, or approving or condemning conscience, to witness the accordancy of declaration with fact, and of conduct wth promise? But all these are provided against, found in man and for man, so that he is shut up, to use his faculties in order to conviction, or to seal up his faculties and be condemned; in a word, there is no excuse for the wilfully blind, who will not examine the truth, embrace the truth, and be guided by the truth."

We are obliged to pass over many of the points the lecturer discussed, and content ourselves by quoting his concluding remarks. Referring to the assertions of the sceptical lecturer that "the Bible was the cause of juvenile depravity, intemperance, and wife-beating," he said—

"Really I do not know how to characterise a mind so constituted, or so grossly perverted, as to call light darkness, and good evil. Were I uninformed enough to ask the first ill-used wife I met whether her husband had been reading, 'Husbands, love your wives,' or whether Bible-reading was the cause of her husband's brutality, she would either pity my ignorance or say, 'Ah, sir, it is not because he loves or

reads the Bible. He never takes it into his hands, but hates it because it condemns his doings. The house of God he never enters; family prayer we never have; his own soul, and the souls of his children, are neglected. Our house is more like hell than a family ever since he became acquainted with infidel companions, who have been wicked enough to cause him to reject all religion—who have led him from his home, and ruined his family. Oh! man of God, come and speak with my husband, and try to win him back to what he once was, and what he ought to be.'

"Ask the drunkard's wife—there she is, barefoot and in rags—that is his dilapidated dwelling, the windows stopped and patched with paper—ask that haggard and poverty-stricken woman, with the sickly child on her arm, if her husband became a drunkard—a frequenter of tap-rooms and parlours with 'good dry skittle ground,' and a member of a 'goose club' at the sign of the 'Ass and Driver,' from too much Bible-reading; because his evenings were spent in communicating its truth to his children; because he read in its pages 'No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.' Was it from its morality and its promises, the history of Jesus coming to save the sinner, and invitations and helps to repentance, that he first became and continues a drunkard? She could not believe me in earnest, but if she did, her reply would be, 'Ah, no, sir! we have no Bible—he pawned it; and if he had, he would not read it. He disbelieves it, because it condemns his conduct. He has not crossed the threshold of the house of God for years, and makes a mock of everything that is religious, and yet he is terrified at the thoughts of death, of God, and of judgment. I am afraid, Sir, he is a Secularist, or a member of some society of unbelievers; at least he lives "without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world;" having lost character, he is without shame. Oh, that he would read that blessed Book! he would no doubt be a changed man. That book which, in my youth and in my father's family, was daily read and believed! My dear father died with his finger resting on Romans viii. 32, and my dear mother repeating, with eye beaming and countenance smiling, "None but Christ." Oh, that my husband was a Bible reader!'

"From the manner in which the lecturer spoke of Sabbath-schools and their teachers—a subject of which he is profoundly ignorant—and the injury which society was receiving by Bible-reading upon the juvenile population, I question whether the lecturer was ever within

the walls of one. He seems to be under the impression that from the ceiling of every school there dangles an effigy or stuffed 'Guy,' with handkerchief in under pocket, purse buttoned up in breeches, and watch in vest or fob, around which the urchins every Sabbath afternoon are ranged, and in rotation, as adroitly as possible—*i.e.*, with delicate handling and quick manœuvre, endeavour to abstract, *á lá vole*, purse or watch from the pocket of the 'Guy,' without causing him to quiver; and the eye of the teacher is there to approve or disapprove, while occasionally the minister himself gives a zest to the whole by exhibiting his own dexterity. Bravo, Mr. Adams! no wonder your virtuous indignation is aroused at such a system—of course insisted upon in the Bible, also the command, '*Husbands, beat your wives, and get drunk every night and morning.*' We, after this exposé, may expect a police-officer or a detective paying us a visit now and then. But, instead of undeceiving you by argument, let me have the pleasure of inviting you next Sabbath afternoon to come and visit our Sabbath-school, where my teachers and superintendent will be most happy to see you. So far from seeing any such things commended or approved as pocket-picking, or shop-lifting, and dram-drinking, the very opposite will be, and always is, inculcated. Bring your little boy along with you, and if you have yet left in your soul any love for the beautiful in morals and the loveliness of truth—for the adornments and ornaments of honesty, sobriety, and peace-breathing kindness, you cannot but have your heart warmed, and leave our school if not a better at least a wiser man, from the very different views of Bible-reading and Sabbath-school teaching than you have hitherto entertained.

"I had still intended to have said a few words more in reply to the assertion (for it amounted to no more) 'that Christianity has failed, and that churches and chapels might be shut up, seeing there was no more use for them.' That our friend labours under some hallucination is not at all improbable. Does he ever fancy himself to be made of glass: is he not afraid of being broken and crushed, or possibly cracked? It is really wonderful how a person may, by prejudice, or obliquity of vision in himself, see every other squint, or the eye become so affected by excess of bile as to see everything under a jaundiced colour, or to become by perversity to 'believe a lie.' Julian, when he struck the medal, believed, like some of his persecuting predecessors, that Christianity was deleted or blotted out. So said Voltaire, and boasted that, singly and alone, he would destroy that which it took

twelve men to build, besides one from heaven; but still it stands. So said Paine, the infidel; but still, like the earth (when old Galilio, under Popery's withering blight, was forced to swear against his own conviction), *it moves, it progresses, nay, she flourishes and triumphantly prevails!* She is divine in her nature, omnipotent in her resources. Heaven and earth may pass away, but she can neither fall nor fail until the great and glorious things spoken of her shall be accomplished!

"I have, by my appearance upon this platform, not only accepted your challenge to come and defend Christianity; but, during four evenings, I have argued and discussed with you, solved your objections, or scattered them, and left you nothing but *silence and shame*. I have thus shown you that ministers of the Gospel are both willing and able to meet the sceptic and the infidel on their own ground, and defeat them with their own weapons.

"No more from this platform can you boast that paid clergymen are afraid to meet the Secularist, and defend the Bible and religion.

"This has now been done by one who is 'less than the least of all saints.' Your utter insignificance and poverty of intellect are now known. The Church need be under no alarm on your account. We understand and know each other. I do not come among you again until you have answered my first lecture. A Sabbath scholar, or one of my teachers, shall be sufficient to keep you in check, and convey you any necessary information till you become men."

CHAPTER XVI.

CONCERNING TIMOTHY'S LAST TURN.

ONE day in the autumn of 187—, the writer was passing through Hull on his way to Filey, when, calling upon a friend, he learnt that he had, while visiting the Infirmary, found a person there in the last stage of consumption. "He knew you very well," said my informant, "and asked if I thought you would be passing through Hull before long, as he was very anxious to see you." "Why, who can he be?" I asked; but as my friend was unable to say, I resolved to call at the Infirmary and enquire. On doing so, I was shown into a room where a man was reclining upon a couch with his back to the door. On hearing me enter, he turned suddenly round, and exclaimed, "George! old fellow! is it you? I'm so pleased to see you." It was indeed my old friend Tim, but so altered! His eyes were deep-sunk in their sockets, but large and lustrous as ever. For some minutes I was too overpowered to speak, and Timothy—his first exclamations over—seemed as much overwhelmed

as myself. At length I asked him how long he had been there? "About a month," he replied, "but it is nearly three months since I returned to Gringleby, thinking my native air would do me good, and anxious to see my poor old father and mother. For the first week I fancied I was a little better, but I soon felt worse than ever, and a gentleman who is a subscriber to this place, urged me to try it. They are very kind to me, but I fear I shall never be much better in this world." I tried to encourage him; but he shook his head, and, as if overpowered, closed his eyes and laid back upon the pillow. Poor fellow! As I sat looking at him, my heart filled. The recollection of our boyhood's days came upon me with a strange power. I could not avoid weeping. At last I asked, "Well, Tim, what about the future?" "Oh!" said he, "I have no fear for that; the darkness is past and the true light shineth. I have been very unfaithful—most unfaithful—but I have obtained mercy. My God is reconciled; He heals all my backslidings and forgives all my sins. Bless His holy Name! But though I have no fear for the future, I feel much regret for the past. Oh! George, it's a solemn thing to lie here through the long days, and the longer nights, thinking! thinking! doing nothing but think of the past—and such a past as mine has been! Mine is a wasted life. I never stopped long enough in any place to grow. I often think about the conversations we have had, when you tried to show me that I was destroying what little power for good I possessed. I have since found it to be so. I am an illustration of that passage,

'Unstable as water, he shall not excel.' George, you cannot be too thankful for a place in God's church. Don't forsake it. If I get better, the first thing I intend doing, is to apply for membership among God's people. If they won't let me in at the door, I will climb in at the window. My feeling is—

> "Might I enjoy the meanest place
> Within Thy house, O God of grace,
> Nor tents of ease, nor thrones of power
> Should tempt my feet to leave Thy door."

As I found Timothy was too weak to bear a long conversation, I prayed with him, and was about to bid him farewell, when, taking a hymn-book from under his pillow, he said, "Before you go, I want you to sing the old hymn I first heard on the camp-ground, 'In evil long I took delight,' &c." I did so as well as I could. When I came to the lines:

> "A second look He gave which said,
> I freely all forgive;"

He exclaimed, "Yes! Freely, freely, all. Oh, what love!

> 'Tis mercy all, immense and free.'"

No words of mine can describe the scene. I was deeply affected, and it was with great difficulty I could tear myself away. As I was leaving, he said, "Call as you come back, if possible." I assured him I would endeavour to arrange to stay a night with him on my way home. When I did so on my return, I was struck with the change for the worse which a few days had made in his appearance. He was evidently sinking. We conversed of the past, and he assured me that for

a long time he had not known what true peace of mind was. "I did think," said he, "when I joined the Plymouth Brethren that I had found rest, but I never was more thoroughly deceived in my life. I found a great show of charity, but was not amongst them long before I discovered that they were the most bitter sectarians I ever met with. I was allured by the appearance of great liberality and deep piety. But I soon found out my mistake. It is true that they hold some very important truths, but they are ingeniously mixed up with the most pernicious and deadly errors. This is done in such a guarded manner that you have to be among them some time before you discover it, and then you are perplexed, and do not know what to do. I have known several who have told me that they had discovered that they had connected themselves with worse evils than those they had abandoned; others have deserted the Christian profession altogether, and become backsliders; while a few have gone back to the churches whence they were seduced, and rejoice at their escape from the bondage of a system which was fast destroying the peace of their souls. To all who are tempted to forsake any of the Evangelical bodies for Plymouth Brethrenism, I say, 'Whatever you do, stay where you are.'

"As for Unitarianism," said he, "that gave me no peace. I became acquainted with several persons belonging the body, who were kind to me, and I felt attached to them. But I found nothing whatever to satisfy the inward longings of my immortal spirit." We talked for some time. At last I rose to leave him,

when, taking farewell of me, he said: "When I first came here, I was able to read a good deal, and to write a little. The friend who obtained admission for me lent me Liddon's Sermons and his Bampton Lectures. They are splendid books"—here the old fire lit up his eye for a moment—"splendid! I have extracted a few passages from them and other works which seem *particularly suited to my case.* Here," said he,—putting at the same time a small parcel of papers into my hands,—"read them and keep them for my sake, and may they strengthen you in your faith, and confirm your resolution to hold fast the beginning of your confidence, without wavering, unto the end."

I took them, and have read them many times since then. Our space will only allow us to quote the following:

"Trust not to your own understanding. He who does so 'is a fool.'"

> "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart;
> And lean not unto thine own understanding.
> In all thy ways acknowledge Him,
> And He shall direct thy paths.
> Be not wise in thine own eyes:
> Fear the Lord; and depart from evil."

"Beware of giving way to a foolish vanity that delights in saying startling 'clever' things, falsely termed original; and especially guard against the folly which seeks notoriety by denying what the majority assert, and depreciating all that they hold in reverence, in a flippant and careless manner. No good man, even when compelled by an inexorable logic to part with religious convictions which once he cherished, can

abandon them altogether without regret, or record his change of opinion without a certain tone of sadness and distress."

"If you would be steadfast and unmovable, be clothed with humility, which is 'both a moral instinct which seeks truth, and a moral instrument for reaching and retaining truth.' Without humility no man is safe for a moment. The higher you climb the mountain-side, the more fatal must be your fall, if you do fall. If you would look over the giddy precipice without risk, you must first stoop to lay hold on the rock of humility. It is not imagination, it is not rhetoric, it is a terrible fact—again and again inflicted upon our understanding by the actual experience of life—that there are no depths of moral degradation to which a man may not sink, who neglects this, the most necessary if not the chief of virtues. Submission of the intellect is only folly, if God has never spoken; and if on the highest subjects that can interest mankind we possess nothing more trustworthy than human speculations. But God *has* spoken, blessed be His Name! and we have heard His voice, and know that that word is the Truth."

"There are some persons who are not seeking 'Truth'; they are enjoying it. They are not like Alpine climbers still making their way up the mountain side; they have gained the summit, and are gazing on the panorama which is spread around and beneath them. It were painful to think of proving that which is the very life of our souls. In their whole spiritual activity, in their prayers, in their meditations, in their

study of Holy Scripture, in their habitual thoughts respecting their eternal future, they take Christ's Divinity for granted; and it never occurs to them to question a reality from which they know themselves to be continually gaining new streams of light, and warmth, and power."

"We may, in life's journey, have met with those who, in a spirit of boisterous self-will, have made a grand tour of the world, and after tasting of the scepticisms, after resisting no form of intellectual temptation, and finding satisfaction, as they must find it, nowhere, return while yet they may, in the evening of their days, to offer to their Maker and their Redeemer the scanty relics of a wasted life. Even for such, we know, there is a smile of recognition and a word of mercy. But for those who, with the Psalmist, seeking Him early and diligently, give Him the hopes of their youth and the strength of their manhood; for those who give intellect when it is now expanding to the full measure of its grasp, and affections when they have as yet lost nothing of their freshness and purity, and will, when it has learnt by obedience something of that freedom, and rectitude, and strength of movement in which its perfection consists; for a Samuel, a David, for a Saul of Tarsus, for a Timothy, ay, for an Augustine (and a Luther, a Baxter, and a Wesley), He prepares, even in this world, a lavish acknowledgment! He bestows on such as these a fulness of blessing, and joy, and peace, which the eye of nature hath not seen, nor its ear heard, nor the unrenewed heart of man conceived to tell."

I promised to go over in a few days and see him again, if he lived; but it proved to be our last interview on earth. A day or two afterwards, I received a telegram from a friend who was with him when he breathed his last. He said, "Our friend has just passed away. He died trusting in Christ. Break the news to his father and mother."

On receiving the tidings, I proceeded at once to visit his aged parents. I found his mother alone. Sitting down, I endeavoured to enter into conversation with her on general matters, but I had not uttered many words before she asked, "Have you heard anything about our poor lad?" "Yes," I replied, "I heard from Hull to-day." "And is he any better?" she asked. "Yes," I said, "much better." "You don't say so! and shall we soon see him?" "Yes," I replied, "you will soon see him, I trust, and be with him for ever." Looking earnestly into my face, the poor mother cried, "I see something's the matter. He's not dead, is he?" "Yes," said I, "he went to heaven at noon to-day." She covered her face with both her hands, rocked herself backwards and forwards upon her seat, and exclaimed, "O! my poor boy. O! my poor boy. I shall never see him again. He was a good lad to me and his poor old father. Oh, my poor old man, whatever will he say?" I tried to comfort her, and while doing so heard the slow and measured step of my old friend, as he approached the door. Never shall I forget the sight. His hair was white as snow, and hung down upon the collar of his coat, and though he was over fourscore years of age, he was as

erect as if only fifty. As he entered the house, he recognised me, and was approaching to shake hands, when the old woman sprang from her seat and exclaimed, "O! Tommy! Tommy! our Tim's dead!" If a bullet had passed through the old soldier's breast, he could not have fallen more suddenly than he did. I called in one or two of the neighbours, who assisted me to lift him on a couch. After awhile he opened his eyes, and looking at me asked, "What was it, George? Something about our Tim? Oh! I remember now. So he's dead, is he? Poor Tim; is he really dead?" "Yes," I replied; "but I believe he's happy." "I'm glad to hear it," said he. "I'm so glad to hear that. Poor Tim! poor Tim! He was a fine lad, a clever lad; was he not, George?" "Yes, he was," I replied in all sincerity. "He was a fine lad." "But he never did any good, for all that, did he?" "Not so much as he might have done," we quietly replied. "No," said the old man. "Poor lad! He was a clever lad, but he wasted his talents by never sticking to anything long. He said, the very last time I saw him: 'Father, I've been like a tree that's never been planted long in a place together: I've bore no fruit. *I never stopped long enough anywhere to grow.*' Poor lad, poor lad; but it's a blessing he's got to heaven after all his wanderings. I hope I shall not be long before I go to him."

The old man's wish was soon realized, for not many months had rolled away before he and his aged partner had passed to that world where all our wanderings cease. They had both been for some years walking

together in all the ordinances of the Lord blameless. Their end was peace.

After praying with them, I left the cottage, musing over the words of the old man: "He was a clever lad, but he threw himself away. He never stayed anywhere long enough to do any good." And often since, when the words recur to my mind, as they frequently do, I pray:—

"Jesus, confirm my heart's desire
To work, and speak, and think for Thee;
Still let me guard the holy fire,
And still stir up Thy gift in me.

"Ready for all Thy perfect will,
My acts of faith and love repeat,
Till death Thy endless mercies seal,
And make the sacrifice complete."

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